



**GLOBE
EDUCATION**

**PLAYING
SHAKESPEARE
WITH DEUTSCHE BANK**

OTHELLO

SYNOPSIS

Iago, jealous that Othello has picked Cassio as his lieutenant over him, and Roderigo, in love with Desdemona, reveal to Desdemona's father Brabantio that Desdemona and Othello have eloped. Othello has been summoned to the senate to discuss the news of a serious threat against Cyprus, and a furious Brabantio raises the issue of the elopement before the Duke of Venice. Othello and Desdemona defend themselves, and the marriage is approved. The Duke commands Othello to sail for Cyprus, with Desdemona to follow separately. Alone, Iago vows to destroy Othello's marriage and take Cassio's place.

A storm destroys the Turkish fleet, and Othello and Desdemona are reunited in Cyprus. Iago tells Roderigo that Desdemona and Cassio are in love, and they come up with a plan to get him fired: they get him drunk, and Roderigo provokes him into a fight. Othello dismisses Cassio, and Iago convinces him that the way to get his job back is through Desdemona.

When Desdemona pleads for Cassio, Iago plants suspicion in Othello's mind that Desdemona is in love with him. Desdemona accidentally drops her handkerchief—her first gift from Othello—and Emilia, Iago's wife, finds it and gives it to Iago who had asked her to steal it for him. Iago tells Othello that he saw Cassio with the handkerchief, and Othello demands that Desdemona and Cassio die for their affair. When Desdemona cannot show him the handkerchief, Othello argues with her and storms away. Having found the handkerchief in his room (where Iago planted it), Cassio asks his mistress Bianca to make him a copy. Iago teases Cassio about Bianca, and Othello overhears and mistakenly thinks that Cassio is bragging about his affair with Desdemona. When Bianca enters and returns the handkerchief to Cassio, Othello takes it as the final proof of Desdemona's infidelity.

Ambassadors from Venice bring the news that Othello is to return home, leaving Cassio as Governor of Cyprus. When Desdemona expresses her happiness, Othello strikes her. He accuses her of being a whore, but both she and Emilia deny it.

Iago realizes that he has one night to make everything fall into place: to kill Cassio, get rid of the increasingly suspicious Roderigo, and make sure that Othello kills Desdemona without ever knowing Iago's own role in his downfall.

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Iago sets his final plan into motion. Roderigo attacks Cassio on the street, but is wounded himself, and Iago must step in and secretly wound Cassio before running away. When Iago returns, falsely rushing to Cassio's aid, he kills Roderigo and tries to pin Cassio's attack on Bianca.

Incorrectly thinking that Cassio is dead, Othello kills Desdemona and is discovered immediately after by Emilia, who raises the alarm and begins to unfold the truth about Iago's involvement, so he stabs her. Othello, devastated by what he has done, kills himself. Iago is committed to Cassio's custody for punishment.
