

## Othello Scene Summary

### Act 1 Scene 2

#### Plot-

Iago warns Othello that Brabantio is searching for him. (Thus highlighting to the audience the duplicit nature of Iago). Cassio brings a summons from the Duke demanding Othello's presence at the court. Brabantio accuses Othello of abducting Desdemona and orders him arrested. But the Duke's command must be answered first.

#### Shakespeare's Language-

"By Janus, I think no. " (1,2:33) Shakespeare uses the symbol of Janus, the Roman two faced God (as a recurring motif) to highlight the duplicity of Iago's character. This is an example of Shakespeare using dramatic irony in order to engage the audience. Dramatic Irony is where the audience know what is happening but the main character does not. The audience is aware of Iago's deceit, but Othello is not, so by Iago saying this to Othello, it should give him an idea of Iago's true nature, but it doesn't.

Even Brabantio is racist towards Othello- he says "sooty bosom", focusing on Othello's colour of his skin, rather than the content of his character.

### Act 1 Scene 3-

The Duke is told of the Turkish plan to attack Cyprus. He welcomes the arrival of Othello and Brabantio. He hears of Brabantio's accusation and Othello's defence and in turn sends for Desdemona to testify. Desdemona tells of her love for Othello. The Duke orders Othello to Cyprus. Desdemona requests to go with him. Her request is granted, but Othello places her under Iago's care on the journey. Roderigo despairs that he will never win Desdemona's love, but Iago has a scheme that excites fresh hope. Iago speaks his evil plans out loud.

#### Shakespeare's Language-

Throughout this scene (and all the others) the label of "Moor" is given to Othello. This would be considered racist by today's standards but highlights the oddity that a black man in a white world was in Shakespeare's time. Othello is a fine character, with excellent morals and a strong sense of honesty, yet he is simply labeled by where he is from and the colour of his skin.

Shakespeare uses both verse and prose in this scene. Verse is used to indicate upstanding characters and in lines 200-218 Shakespeare employs the use of rhyme. The use of rhyming couplets highlights that the Duke and Brabantio are happy with Othello and Desdemona's relationship. This is juxtaposed with the use of prose in Iago's response (lines 306-313) where he expresses his hate for Othello and indeed the Duke's lines (219-226), delivered in prose, where he describes the Turks and the battle that is approaching.

Shakespeare uses foreshadowing, a technique designed to engage the audience by giving clues as to how the plot will unfold. This is aligned with dramatic irony, the audience know who is bad and what will happen, so Shakespeare used many small clues in the presence of the main character, Othello, that may or may not possibly indicate what will happen next. It was used to build suspense in the plot.

Othello says of Iago "my Ancient: A man he is of honesty and trust."(1,3:281) (which is dramatic irony) and adds " to his conveyance I assign my wife" (1,3:282) and then states for Iago to hear, "My life upon her faith."(1,3:291). This foreshadows to the audience a way in which Iago will attack Othello. This is confirmed in Iago's soliloquy in lines 374-395.