

Documenta

IAGO

Metatheatre for four characters and chorus

Marcus Mota

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By Marcus Mota
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CAST

ACTOR A, who plays IAGO, the confused evil that slowly manifests itself but only through the action of others. The persuasive voice.

ACTOR B, who plays CASSIO, the common man in the wrong place and time.

ACTOR C, who plays OTHELLO, an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, dragging men and women without knowing where.

ACTOR D, who plays DESDEMONA, the end of the cycle, the attempt to break through with the fascination caused by violence.

CHORUS, at every moment a reaction.

Scenery of war. Wire fences, trenches and twisted metal. Scattered bodies of dead soldiers. The (adapted) performance of the end) of Othello, by W. Shakespeare.

(The audience enters accompanied by the 'Willow Song'. Othello is slightly distant from his dead wife, Desdemona. The armed and threatening Chorus enters. Othello, wielding his sword in response:)

OTHELLO

Behold, I have a weapon;

A better never did itself sustain

Upon a soldier's thigh: I have seen the day,

That, with this little arm, and this good sword,

I have made my way through more impediments

Than twenty times your stop. (Giving up, seeing the uselessness of the action) But oh, vain boast!

Who can control his fate? 'Tis not so now.

Be not afraid, (to the sword) though you do see me weaponed;

(Plays against the sword, until he reaches its tip.)

Here is my journey's end, here is my butt

And very seamark of my utmost sail.

Do you go back dismayed? 'Tis a lost fear;

Man but a rush against Othello's breast,

And he retires. Where should Othello go?

(To the dead woman.)

Now, how dost thou look now? Oh, ill-starred wench!

Pale as thy smock! When we shall meet at compt,

This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,

And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl?

Even like thy chastity. Oh cursed, cursed slave!

Whip me, ye devils,

From the possession of this heavenly sight!

Blow me about in winds! Roast me in sulfur!

Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!

O Desdemona! Dead Desdemona! Dead! Oh! Oh!

(Another partion of the Chorus enters bringing in Iago as prisoner. Cassio leads this Chorus. Cassio is hurt, weak.)

CASSIO

Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

OTHELLO

That's he that was Othello... Here I am.

CASSIO (commanding Iago forward.)

Where is the viper? Bring the villain forth!

OTHELLO (Looking towards Iago's feet.)

'Tis a fable. If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee. (He wounds Iago with the sword.)

CASSIO (to the Chorus)

Wrench his sword from him!

IAGO

I bleed, sir... but not killed!...

OTHELLO (Held by part of the Chorus)

I am not sorry neither! I'd have thee live,

For in my sense 'tis happiness to die.

CASSIO

Oh, Othello, that was once so good,

Fallen in the practice of a cursed slave!

What shall be said to thee...

OTHELLO

Why, anything...

An honorable murderer, if you will,

For naught did I in hate, but all in honor.

CASSIO (pointing to Iago)

This wretch hath part confessed his villainy.

Did you and he consent in this together?

OTHELLO

Ay.

CASSIO

But General, for what reason?

OTHELLO

Now I know. I don't deserve pardoning.

Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil

Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body.

IAGO

Demand me nothing. What you know, you know.

From this time forth I never will speak word.

OTHELLO (Outraged but held back by the Chorus)

Viper! Viper! Villain!

CASSIO (to Othello)

You must forsake this room! At once!

Your power and your command is taken off.

(to Iago) For this slave,

If there be any cunning cruelty

That can torment him much and hold him long,

It shall be his. Come, bring away.

(pushes Othello) You shall close prisoner rest.

OTHELLO

(Interrupting their exit)

Soft you; a word or two before you go.

I have done the state some service, and they know it.

No more than that. I pray you, in you letters,

When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,

Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,

Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak

Of one that loved not wisely but too well;

Of one not easily jealous but, being wrought,

Perplexed in the extreme; of one whose hand,

threw a pearl away. The richest of all. Speak of one whose subdued eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,

Drop tears as ever.
Set you down this;
And say besides that in travels once,
Where a malignant thief
Beat a citizen and traduced the state,
I took by the throat the miserable dog,
And smote him, thus. Ah....
(Othello stabs himself with his sword.)

CASSIO
Oh, bloody period! All that is spoke is marred.

OTHELLO
(to the woman)
I kissed thee ere I killed thee. No way but this:
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

(He falls over the woman. Everyone observes the dead bodies. Slowly, part of the Chorus makes a circle around the cadavers and the other part leaves with Iago who is pushed off stage with violence, his face being covered with a hood for his hanging. Scene. The stage is emptied. After a few instants the actor who played the role of Iago enters. He arrives with the sound of a standing ovation. The actor stumbles in, with his hands on his left flank, holding a dead wound that bleeds. He throws himself on a couch upstage, takes a remote control, and stares at the spectators. After complaining about his pains he begins to speak. As he does, the actor that played the role of Michael Cassio enters. While Michael Cassio helps Iago with his costume and make-up, the actors who played Othello and Desdemona enter happily from upstage.)

ACTOR A, WHO PLAYS IAGO
That bastard! Bastard!

ACTOR B, WHO PLAYS CASSIO
Relax! Let me see?! (Meddling with Iago's clothes.)

A
Ouch! Get your hands off. Want to kill me too?

B
I just want to see what happened. The armor: take it off!

A (Pushing)
Get out! Stay away from me!

B (Trying to take the armor off)
Let me help you. Raise your arms!

A (As the armor is taken off)

No! Ouch, right there, right there! He hit me on purpose, see?! On purpose!

B

Calm down! This way...

A

Look at this cut! He could of ruined me!

B (Taking off Iago's clothes with care.)

I don't know why we've got so much clothes on!

A

Ouch, you idiot! Be careful!

B (Gives up. Stops what he was doing.)

You're exaggerating! It wasn't that bad. It was close.

A

You think it wasn't that bad? I wasn't that bad? You're always forgiving the poor little thing, the bastard... always...

B (Cleaning himself. The blood.)

Me? What do I have to do with this!

A (Dressing himself on his own) It's very dangerous to be Iago! Someone has to do something!

B

Do you want my role? Othello's? Or Desdemona's? (laughing)

A

Cut it out, cut it out. As always, you don't understanding anything, anything. As always.

B (Turning back)

What do you mean?! What are you coming up with now?

A (as if speaking to the audience)

What did I just say? You really can't understand anything!

B

Look, everyone knows this play!

A

Things got worse... Iago getting wounded is scary.

B

Who?

A

That bastard! And you, what an idiot!

B

Don't tell me you're afraid?! A simple accident and...

A

(Trying to get up and withdrawing from Cassio) Accident? You know, you're becoming more and more alike Cassio: you're just someone that has no clue, that continues clueless.

B

What are you really talking about, after all?! Speak up!

A

Everything right there in front of you and you just don't get it!!! Just don't get it!!!

B

I saw the scene! I was there! He did what he had to do! That's it!

A

So you think that was it? That the poor little bastard...

B (impatient)

What is this new immense mystery that...

A

What do you think? Do you think it's easy to carry all this, this world of horror and destruction, like this without thinking about anything? Do I look like a machine? A monster?

B (Trying to show what happened)

What...?

A (Embracing Cassio)

You want me to explain everything to you, right? Want me to show everything, what we're really doing here, night after night!?! Well I can do that my friend. I can do that for you. I'll tell you everything you need to know. And then, I want to see who dares to call my role one of a simple villain.

(‘Othello’ and ‘Desdemona’ enter kissing)

ACTOR C, WHO PLAYS THE PART OF OTHELLO

Look at how friendly they are already! It's the play's new couple!

ACTRESS D, WHO PLAYS THE PART OF DESDEMONA

Shakespeare is full of surprises!

C (Turns, and after the speech, kisses the woman; she is slightly uncomfortable with the

situation.)

The show must go on. (He tries to keep her next to him, in his arms.) While he's busy trying to destroy the world, we...

D (taking some distance.)

Someone needs to do the dirty job.

A (to C)

Your sword is getting sharper each day, do you hear me?

C

Then be careful! And don't get too close to me! And specially (to he woman) her!

D

He looks at me like... Looks like he's stalking me, chasing me.

C (to A)

Did you hear that?! Did you hear that???

B (trying to prevent the conflict)

Calm down! Calm down! Quit fighting! There's still people around!

A

(to C. Ironic.) Yes, you really, really are looking more like Othello.

C (To A)

What do mean by that?

A (To B)

Told you so.

C (To D)

What does he mean: (Shakes the woman) Tell me, tell me!

D

I don't know!

C (Lets the woman go and charges in A's direction)

Let me show you what I thing of you staring at my woman!

D (tired, as if repeating an old script)

It's always the same, every day the same thing...

B

(Trying to stop the fight) Are you crazy? Enough of this, you hear me?! Enough!

C

(to B) Let go of me! Let me finish him up.

D

“Honest Iago”... what a crappy line!

B

Stop this! Stop this!

(The actor that plays Iago is pushed by Othello and disdainfully goes to his chair, holding his wounds as he laughs).

A

“I do love thee. And when I love thee not, Chaos is come again.”

D (Getting up from the floor.)

There’s no use. Look at him!

C (to A)

Listen to this, kid: tomorrow, during the performance, if you go near her, get ready: I am going to get you in front of everyone, you hear me? Do you understand? You’ve been warned: tomorrow you won’t escape. Tomorrow I end this torment! (C and D exit. C pulls D by the arm forcefully.)

A (to B)

Did you see what happened? Did you see what he did? That’s what I was talking about.

B (Taking off his costume, make-up and getting ready to leave.)

Yeah, yeah. The stuff only you understand! Again!

A (typical monologue)

You don’t have to be Iago to understand what is going on, my friend. I hate the moor and he hates me. They put us together in this play and the more time goes by, the more certain I am that it wasn’t a good idea to join people like us together. Sometimes I lack the necessary evil to make happen, for once and for all, what is inevitable, what needs to happen. And as I wait, night after night, I keep thinking why delay something that I myself, at any moment, can do... It’ll be an eye for an eye!

B (Tired of Iago’s monologues)

Let’s go for a drink? Today everything was hard to get over with, a drag. It felt like torture. Everyday it gets worst, seems like it will never end. Let’s go for a drink?

A

The night, my friend, the night. This is a perfect night for Iago.

(They exit stepping and tripping over the bodies lying on the floor. Then, distorted sounds of a bloody battle are heard. Deaf cries of someone that is hit by surprise by the blow of a sword, is unable to ask for help, and sees himself drown under the blade that opens spaces in the hit body, swallowing any possibility of escape. Noises of bones slowly breaking

until they turn into dust. Sounds of iron swords weaving their choreography of clashing and lightning. The continuous thumps of low-pitched drums in a uniform rhythm, punctual, like steps of something approaching, something over our heads. In the midst of this mythic battle, human voices emerge, sounds without words or melody, a hoarse sigh, guttural, like the waves from the sea, coming and going, bringing the memory of the souls without name or face, one single breath forming before us. Initiated by this Chorus, the mutilated bodies from all the wars start to get up and march against the audience, a very slow march, that grows in the eyes of those who walk increasingly eliminating the audience's field of vision. When the distance between audience and Chorus is inexistent, there is a stomping of drums and trilling of a very high-pitched flute. The Chorus falls and upstage A and B enter drunk, talking, one carrying the other. Actor A fills B's cup.)

B

With so many women in the world you decided to...

A

But she is beautiful, isn't she? Specially because she's with him...

B

(Taking some distance) I don't get it! What do you mean by...

A (reaches to serve him more liquor.)

When you see such a happy couple, don't you feel like going there and...

B

And what?

A

You know, you know the old story.

B

No man, I don't know anything. What do you mean?

A

Look, you can tell me: you never wanted to know more about her? To peak through the blinds of the dressing room?

B

Who? Me!?

A

Every night you talk, one of these nights, the two of you together...don't tell me you never thought of it!?!

B

But...but...

A

You can tell me. To me, you can say everything. What wrong with it – desiring the guy's woman. Is it forbidden to like women? What's the problem? You can like her if you want to. If you want to, you can even have her. I don't care...

B

But I never wanted anything with her! Where did you get that from. Indeed, she is very beautiful. But from thinking about it to wanting something more...

A

And why not? Just because it isn't written? Do you need someone to tell you what to do?

B (offering his cup)

What I need is another drink. With you nearby, I need more to drink.

A

"Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus." If you want her, she's yours. She loves you. And there's nothing better than this, the love of a woman day in and day out.

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B (Drinking laughing.)

It's no use. You won't convince me. And the drinks are on you!

A (Distancing himself with the drink.)

Oh, your noble and dedicated nature is unbearable! Slave to everything thing there ever was!

B(following A)

Hey! You can go, but leave the drink!

A (Avoiding B from getting the drink)

But I invite you to pay closer attention to things, to see more, to see better. Answer me: when did they, the damn little couple start to go out?

B

I don't know, I don't remember. I think since the first rehearsals.

A

Very well. And did they always demonstrate "intense passion and desire"?

B

No, no. Just in the beginning. Only until the opening night. Give it to me, give it to me.

A (Giving the bottle to B.)

And then? Remember!

B (Trying hard to remember)

As the performances went by... things started calming down... the caresses disappearing...

A

And everything became cold and empty – a profound bore. He became ever so violent and virile...

B

Yes... maybe... maybe...

A

In other words, they made a point out of parading this filth around, turning everybody into audience members of this horror.

B

I don't know... I think...

A

Cassio, Cassio, what you think is love is nothing more than a parasite, that was inserted in us to distract us. My friend Cassio: how long will you continue invisible, forgotten behind Othello?

B (laughing)

Me who? What do you...

A

(Pulling B by the arm closer to him) The woman, Cássio, take the woman and your history will be different. "There are many events in the womb of time which will be delivered." So take the woman and sink your teeth in her! You need this today, now. They're having dinner near here. Let's go end this farce! I hate liars!

B

Let go of my arm, you lunatic! Get away from me!

A

The woman, Cassio. You can, you should. Nothing in this world makes sense until Cassio doesn't sleep with Othello's woman, at least once. Let's add some fun into this unendurable play.

B

Leave me, man! The sword, it must have been poisoned! I'm not going to be your sword! You must have lost a lot of blood!

A (Pushing B off stage)

The right horse covering the right mare, the old goat with his horns buried in the ground! Alas, the world on the right track!

(The same Chorus enacts a burlesque dance with animalistic and scornful motifs. The actor who plays Iago walks through this landscape of satires clasped onto the actor who

plays Cassio, trying to persuade him to be bold. After they exit, part of the Chorus leaves and pushes on stage a bed with the actors who play Desdemona and Othello. The other part of the Chorus continues its dance. With the arrival of the bed, everything softens and the nocturnal beasts appease their frenzy. The actress who plays Desdemona is lying down on the bed over Othello.)

ACTRESS D WHO PLAYS DESDEMONA

(Putting her hands on C's head, embracing his neck.)

Do you love me? Truly love me?

ACTOR C WHO PLYAS OTHELO (Turning towards her. Rude.)

Why this now?

D

(Lowering her hands, placing them over Othello's hands.) Just answer me: do you love me?

C (pushing her hands away)

You come up with some strange questions. And at this time of the night...

D

(Turns abruptly. Sitting over Othello's abdomen. They sit facing each other, looking into each other's eyes. He is about to say something but she interrupts him by placing a finger over his lips. He smiles, thinking of sex. He comes closer to kiss her, opens his arms for an embrace and she distances herself, getting up and taking the sheet with her. She uses the sheet to support the references in her text.)

Until the middle of the third act, I am beautiful, gorgeous and you want me. A nuptial evening awaits us. The bed is made, the sheets are clean and the door is open. But in the fourth act, you go mad. You come to me with all your rage and slap me without reason. And soon after, in the fifth and final act, while I sleep in our bed, in the same clean sheets, the open door, you come in holding a candle in search of my neck. You kiss me and I don't recognize you. You tell me you're going to kill me and I plead God for mercy, plead you for mercy. And you stand waving in my face the memory of a handkerchief. Then kill me tomorrow, wait a little, or in another half hour, I plead, with despair shortening my breath. And you shut my mouth screaming, calling me a whore, your strong and hard hands finding my neck. And there is no more light or anything else to see or breathe. Everything while I was asleep. So do you love me? Is this how men love? (She sits on the floor and cries. Othello gets up and reaches to embrace her, console her. She refuses. He continues the forceful embrace, seeing her fragile, the body appearing through the sheet.) Why? Why all this? First love. Then... Women, they always need to die: asphyxiated, mad, poisoned... First, the love. And after love, the end of love, where love points toward: death. (Turns facing him and speaks desperately. Meanwhile, the Chorus starts to move in siege, the pleasure in the anticipated pain of the recoiling prey shines in their eyes.) What if I don't want this, huh? Is that ok? Is it ok if I don't want it this way, all this misfortune? And

what if I don't want this death, these hands around my throat? Can I not want this, can I? Can I refuse, run away, run, leave?! (To everyone in the theatre) No one, no one comes to help when a woman screams. (Looks at him) The assassin parades his strength in front of everyone. And nothing. He brings the light, my dear, he invades a room that is solely his. He searches for you and finds you under the evermore satisfying gaze of the audience. (She pushes Othello away from her. She falls to the floor crying. The Chorus takes the sheet, covers itself, and prepares to cover Desdemona, as in an attack, as in sex. Only her face will be exposed outside of this incredible apparatus.) So this is how the man loves me: with my wounds, with my dead body, disgusting - repugnant and stone-like. Until half of the third act I am beautiful and gorgeous. And to cum, you slap me around and shred me into pieces. (Othello interrupts the scene taking the sheet off and embracing Desdemona. The Chorus runs away as if it had been humiliated, uncovered in its own nudity.)

C (Firmly to the woman, holding her hands.)

Stop this and listen to me: I am not Othello, you hear me? I am not Othello!

D

(Weeping) Why show these things? Why make a performance out of this?! A woman, my love, a woman... Do you understand? Can you... (Enter Cassio and Iago drunk, as if they were under the building where Othello and Desdemona live. They call for Othello with provocations about his virility)

C (Distancing himself. Grabs a drink.)

The season is ending. Let's see if you...

D

Do you know what it means to die every day? Every day?

C

Do you think it only happens to you? I die at the end too.

D

No, you kill yourself. It's different.

C (Drinks. Laughing)

Way too many corps in this junk

D

I want to know, tell me (takes the cup away from him): when you hit me or asphyxiate me, what do you feel, huh? What goes through your mind? How can you not feel anything doing that to me?

C (getting the cup back and distancing himself, not facing Desdemona in the eyes)

But Othello must kill. (Laughing and pouring himself some more) Or else, it wouldn't be Othello.

D

That's why I asked if you loved me. If you really loved me, you'd never let this happen to me.

C (Turning, a bit angry.)

What is your point with this bullshit conversation, huh? What?

D (Distancing herself from him)

Exactly this. This!

C(Going after her, with anger, holding the drink and the glass.)

Do you, by any chance, think that anyone would come here to see "the love of Othello and Desdemona?" No, no, no. There come here for this: to make sure that everything will end terribly, as always. (The Chorus starts to enact choreographed acts of war) This is what fascinates: the renewed view of everything in destruction. No one leaves the house to see (parodying) "Do you love me? Do you love me.... What if I don't want to... is it alright... is it alright..." There are better things to do, honey. Yes... A soldier knows his battles. And there is no way out of them. And times are such that it's impossible to escape war.

D (understanding things)

And even those who don't go to war, those who don't fight, must die...

C

You're starting to get it.

D

That's why you only hurt Iago, but you murder me every day.

C (Realizing what he has said)

No, no, no: that's different. I really like you, I really want you.

D

I know, I know. I can only imagine if you didn't...

C

What's this for? What's all this for? Do you think it's easy for me...

D

What for you?

C

Have you ever thought about Othello?

D

And you about Desdemona?

C (Distancing himself, tired. Without an argument. He sits)
There's no way you can think about her. But Othello... terrible! It's terrible!

D
Why? Why is it that with a mad jealous mistaken man who kills a woman, it's worse?

C
Othello's problem is not jealousy.

D
Oh no it isn't? Look at this sword! Look at the sword!

C (Turning towards Desdemona)
Othello's big problem is the woman.

D
What?

C
Without the woman, none of this would have happened. There would be no reason for him to do what he did. If she didn't exist, everyone would be happier.

D (surprised)
So now Othello is a philosopher! I didn't know that... so he's not the idiot anymore, the stupid imbecile that followed the voice of another imbecile? Isn't that who Othello is? Well I'll tell you, my love, Othello is a thousand times worse than Iago. And you, a thousand times worse than Othello.

C (Distancing himself from Desdemona. He doesn't want to look at the woman's face. Wrath!)
You better stop. I have nothing to do with this. We were here together and all of a sudden...

D
Don't run away now. I need to talk.

C (thinking, his back to Desdemona)
Seems like we have all night, my love, all night.

(Lights off. Lit, in another place, Cassio enters being pushed by a totally possessed Iago determined to accomplish the destruction of everything around them. Both are drunk and tired of looking for the couple.)

ACTOR B WHO PLAYS CASSIO
Stop pushing me, I said! Stop pushing me!

ACTOR A WHO PLAYS IAGO
Let's go, we're almost there.

B

You've been saying this all night long!

A (Stops. Looks around.)

It's this way. They should be near here.

B

That's what you said when we went after them back at the bar.

A

And we got there too late. I was right. Like now.

B

It's late. Tomorrow we have rehearsal and then the performance.

A

They must be at home. I'm sure!

B

They're the ones that are right. Enough! The hunt is over!

A

We need to go on, ok? We have to.

B (Interrupting the pushing and pulling)

We who? What do I have to do with this? You invent something, you push me into it and then I have to take the lead?

A

Stop thinking and look how much we've advanced. Earlier there wasn't anything, just a hunch. Now we are here, at the break of day, ready to do what really needs to be done.

B

But what bullshit are you pushing me into? Explain!

A

There's no use in telling you everything now. Listen: after we carry out, after specially you carry out, that's when everything will make sense. Otherwise it will seem like something just between him and I, a little vengeance of sorts. Everyone saw the guy wounding me with his sword. Everyone saw his anger against me. But that doesn't matter. It doesn't matter that it happened to me. That's not the most important thing. The important thing is you...

B

Me?!

A

Yes, you, precisely you, who were always there, available, nonresistant nor being difficult. You are the best in this case. Only you can bring benefits to everyone involved in this. Without you, nothing that comes will have any value. It's the most righteous thing in this world. With me everything is shameful and horrible. But with you it's perfection. So, as much as you force yourself or refuse to, as much as you don't understand or don't want to, only you, my friend, only someone like you will succeed in making the wheels of the world move.

B

(Sits down and laughs of exhaustion.)

A

Soon you will stop resisting and will do it, you will hit Othello and Othello will fall. And everything will make sense. Seeing the great man fall, you will understand what I want, what I am helping you to accomplish. Then, you will have, at last, the woman, everything you ever wanted. All of the useless days of your life will be behind you. Because of the woman, an entire life went down the drain and a new one is about to begin.

B (Hands on his head.)

Stop talking, please. Stop! Stay away from me! Enough! There so much babbling in this play!

A (Getting him up)

Cassio, Cassio: get up. Let's go to the moor's house, interrupt once again an incomplete lover affair. Othello's bed will be yours. The guy's woman is our partner. When everything gets worse, that's when we are at our best.

B

But...but...

A

Don't think about anything. Focus Cassio, focus. Everything must happen as it was written. Yesterday and today, the novelty is the same sword in these pieces of meat. Look at how the lights in their apartment haven't gone out yet. And where there is light, there is a door open for us. (The Chorus dresses in war suits. In the next sequence, the dialogues will be articulated with regard to a bloody war carried out by the Chorus.)

ACTRESS D WHO PLAYS DESDEMONA

(Putting on her costume from her performance in Othello)

I'm leaving. It's impossible to stay with someone like you.

ACTOR C WHO PLAYS OTHELLO (In bed, in his underwear, hands on his organs,

frustrated from interrupted sex.)

Oh, so you're going to run away. And I am the coward one!

D

What are you going to do? Arrest me? Kill me?

C

You did what you did, accused me of everything and now...

D

You never understand, do you? You are always the poor little man that never understands.

C

We were in bed and then you, out of nowhere, went...

D (He stands up and crosses to planning on reverting the situation.)

So it's my fault?!! That's what you mean. The fault is...

C

What do you want, huh? Tell me: what do you want me to do?

D

Take your hands off of me!

C (Surprised)

But, but who do you think you are?!!

D

Take your hands off of me 'cause I already know where this is headed. (Leaves the apartment. Iago enters celebrating.)

ACTOR A WHO PLAYS IAGO (He revolves around C, as if getting to know the room and showing it.)

The entire room prepared, the bed, the lights...

C (Sitting on the bed, confused, even more frustrated.)

The last person in the world that I wanted to see today was you.

A

Honestly, too beautiful a place to stay single.

C

She will return. When the season is over, everything will be alright.

A

You really did set the scene. Makes me even want to be your woman.

C

One of these nights I am going to hit you hard with the sword.

A

But what's the use of the room without her, right? That's the reason for this entire scene, every effort to be here with the woman. At the end of the day, that's the only thing that matters.

C

Another shit-face that talks, talks non-stop!

A (Speaking closely to C)

But right now she has gone down the stairs and met Cassio. She cries and is sad, and you certainly know why. (In C's ear) Cassio will listen to what she has to say. Cassio will love to hear each word, every single one the woman needs to say. And between them will grow a desire to be together, to be even closer, away from this room where everything ends. (Distancing himself from C) And you, my friend, can't do a single thing. Because she is gone. Even if you bring the woman back, even if you tie her body on the bed and bury her in here, she has already left this room. The woman was so close to you and in an instant, a breath, everything was gone, forever.

C (Standing up)

That's what you want, isn't it? That's what you have always wanted. That's why you stalked me with your eyes. Ever since the first rehearsals, the same thing, your eyes on everything I did, stealing from me all the time.

A

Now she talks with Cassio, they are face to face, the same air in their lungs. She is already in him, just like Cassio is in her deepest insides.

C (pulling A towards him)

Look at me, you shit-face. Always wanting my spot, cheering for me to mess up or get sick, rehearsing my parts, wanting everything that's mine. You searched for me in everything. Wherever you went, you searched for me. Well now, here in my room, the lights on, the bed all done, you did it, you idiot, you found me. Now it's just the two of us and what will happen? Do you think I am going to run away or call for someone else? It's just you and me, face to face, for real; not your bullshit friend or my woman. And what are you going to do, huh? Kiss me? Bite me? Scream or roar with laughter? (Throws A on the floor. C speaks encircling the stricken man.) You are a piece of shit, a useless provocation. You spent the entire year, days and nights getting ready, doing what you could to be here. So go, disappear, shove yourself into this loony vision. You shit-face! Shit-face! You think you're the hot stuff in the show! You piece of shit, shit, shitty shit-face! Worst actor, horrible, piece of garbage!

(Pulls C and takes him against the wall to beat him up. The Chorus prepares a torture

chamber with a woman in the middle, duplicating the scene. Each phrase from Othello is a blow on Iago.) Did you ever truly believe that this talk about my woman could affect me? Even her father told me that she was unworthy of trust and cursed our lives. Others talked about the dangers of falling in love with an actress. But she is my prize. I deserve the woman for everything I have already done. Tomorrow is the last performance, the consecration. And you won't disturb me. Neither you nor anybody. I will do everything I can to keep things just the way they are.

(On a staircase, B and D talk)

ACTOR B WHO PLAYS CASSIO

It's dangerous to wander the streets without destination at night.

ACTOR D WHO PLAYS DESDEMONA

Danger is living with this man, with any man.

B

Go back to your home, before someone spreads lies.

D

A woman can't talk to a man without it becoming an accusation. A woman can't walk down the streets unnoticed. It's impossible not to be seen, invaded, ruined. It's like a threat, an eternal threat, since birth.

C

But it's always been this way. That's why you need protection and...

D

I don't need any protection! You are just like him. You are all alike. I don't need anything, did you hear me? I don't need to need this. Now, just because it has to be this way, you present yourselves as heroes and make my life miserable. But I don't want that anymore either. I refuse all your help. I will stand here until the end, speaking and screaming, until someone listens to me and leaves this darkness and screams too, really loud. And, who knows, with this terrible screaming, something, someone will listen and my blood won't be spilled. Did you understand me, you piece of shit? Do you understand me now? Do you want me to dance and sing it all over again?

B (disturbed)

And that damn Iago saying all that rubbish about love and women, making me loose a huge time with all this madness. (Grabs her arm.) Let's go, let's go, let's go, ma'am. Let's go to your room. Ma'am, you are going to straighten things out with your husband. I have nothing to do with this. You can talk and scream whatever you want. But not to me. It's not my fault. You can unload this bunch of stuff in your room, the farthest away from here. (Pushing the woman back to the room.)

D (Walking against her will)

It's what I expected. You didn't understand anything. You jerk, jerk! All of you!

B

And to think that I almost believed that you...

D

Jerk, jerk: let me go, you're exactly like him.

B

Oh, stupid night out, night out full of shit!

D

Leave me here, don't take me back to the room!

B

"As Cassio shall smile, Othello shall go mad..."

(In the room. When C starts thinking from A's stimuli.)

ACTOR A WHO PLAYS IAGO (Wounded and tired of getting beaten up. The double torture continues.)

I'm not the one you should be hitting, my friend!

C

How many times will I have to hurt you for you to shut your mouth!

A

You can wound me and make me bleed but nothing, nothing will stop me from saying what I have to say.

C

Talk, talk, talk. All night long there are people talking in my ear.

A

Listen to me then. See what I have to say. You know very well what I'm going to say.

C

You don't have to say anything else. Just leave my house.

A

My dear Othello, today's Othello, see more, see better. She has been gone for quite a while. And so has Cassio. And you are here beating me up. How should I put this? How should I pronounce myself? Here are the facts, the truth honestly put. And I still need to argue? Considering all this, I still need to persuade you? (Pronouncing all the syllables:) She doesn't want you anymore. All of a sudden, that's what happened. After a night of love, she has shown a different face. Cumming wasn't enough, all the previous nights

were good for nothing. You always did you best, always honored your strong presence. Everything was here in this bed, all of you science. And in one instant, in a brief moment without an answer, she, self-confident, removed from all of these things, insensitive to you and this earnest effort, she, the woman, Othello, just her, the woman whispered within herself, in the darkness of the room, deep down in the sheets, ‘good-bye’, ‘good-bye’. Even when you were insider her, the woman cleared space to escape away from your face. Even when you used all of your muscles to contain her, she was running straight to someone else’s arms. As she waited for you to become weak to take you by surprise, to tell you those words, to wound you on the face. And you won’t ever be able to hush what wanders in you ears, never will be able to close your eyes. She wanted it this way, she doesn’t want you anymore. Cumming wasn’t enough, and she says good-bye.

C (Distancing himself, troubled, thinking, not wanting to accept the reality Iago is proclaiming)

She didn’t say any of this, you stupid. You weren’t even here. You don’t know a thing.

A

Then why did you beat me up so much? What do you want to hide? Is it my fault she doesn’t want you any more?

C (Turning towards Iago.)

If so, then why didn’t she tell me... didn’t... But no, she stood there pretending to be Desdemona, in anguish because of I-don’t-know-what and blaming me.

A

That’s the way they do it when they don’t want to say the truth. Everything is something else, bigger and more intense. But what is really happening is they are leaving.

C (Remembering. Talking to himself.)

We left, dined, came over here, everything was fine, I was there, ready, and all of a sudden, without any explanation, she started to talk and ask me if I loved her.

A (Growing, knowing he as sunk his teeth into Othello.)

See? Didn’t I tell you? She demands what she can’t give back. It’s always the same question! And what does she want to know that she doesn’t already? That’s it, my friend, that’s it!

C

Then she changed into the character of the play and started demanding that I change everything, that I stop doing what I always do, to save her from this world that she said she was seeing.

A (A woman from the Chorus is displayed in a chair, arms tied up, eyes blindfolded. A line of torturers whip her.)

A disease, my dear, a terrible disease is what they have. Where have you ever seen such a

tremendous show like this one just to deviate the attention from the truth?

C

And then, faced with my complete surprise and ignorance, she started to accuse me, as if I were the only one guilty of all the suffering and anguish and miseries that all the women of all the ages and nations have suffered or will suffer.

A

What a farce! What a terrible farce, with the sole purpose to make people think the worst of you, to hide what she is really doing.

C

And then, because of this, I become the most terrible man there ever was, someone capable of killing his own woman because of a mistake, a lie, because of the crap of a lie invented and produced by my own woman?

A

Well while you are confused, she is in action. While you are disturbed, she takes advantage. All of the paths are open for the woman. She got out of the room, escaped from what she transformed into prison and torture. The hands of a man became instruments of pain and humiliation. You ended her dreams. Because of you she has been forgotten and abandoned. You made her think she couldn't get anything better than this bed. But she wants more, lots more.

C (With his hands on his head, as if having an enormous headache upon the revelation.)

A lie!!! A tremendous lie, all of this, Iago! "Damn her, lewd minx!"

A

In all honesty, she's been deceiving you for a long time.

C

Making me believe, wanting me to believe in all this, that I am monster, for her to be free, happy. How could I live this way, carrying the misery of this horrible, horrible blame? But she must have planned everything when she chose me as target. (Falls in bed and holds the sheets firmly)

A

She left no detail behind.

C

How could I have thought that someone was capable of doing this? Now that I make no sense, I have no value.

A

And history goes on. Now it will be Cassio. Who knows what will follow...

C

Rage carves into my soul and I must follow suit. I am completely vulnerable and beside myself. I need to do something Iago, I need to tear this wound open.

A

Do what you must.

(Outside the building)

B (Sitting on the floor, holding to a bottle of liquor, hands in his pants. The Chorus performs a harem that puts a drunken Cassio to sleep.)

May the woman do what she wills! I don't care. I don't want to care. Nothing is going to happen because of me. If I went up the stairs and her husband saw me... Iago, Iago's eyes! ... But nothing is going to happen anyway. She is beautiful and I want her. That crappy Iago! ... I'd certainly like her to... The worst thing is a night like this one, the drinks, everything ready, and nothing. But I want her... How I want her... Her mouth in my mouth, the smell of her hair... The heat of her skin, of all her skin on my fingers... Oh, woman! Shit! Oh, this is nice, oh, this is really good. Right here, like this, that's it. Take it, come on: take it all. Shit! This is so good! Crap of shit! This woman is so beautiful, she's beautiful. Oh....oh...

(On the stairs)

D (While Desdemona speaks, the chorus comes sliding on the floor in attack position. Slowly they take hold of her body until she stops speaking)

When I left home, my father felt betrayed. He suffered in my place as if he were my man's woman, as if he were going to sleep and make love to a man that was all his. My father could only see me suffering and in pain because I was born solely to make love to another man. So, betrayed and torn inside, he stopped talking to me, with others, full of shame and fear of seeing himself in bed making love. I could see in his face the traces of nails closing his eyes so he would never again see the fear. Then I left home, never again to return. And I saw other men, like my father, guilty for feeling like women, afraid, men afraid of the violator. And in no other did I see but this: the terror of being a woman, the terror of becoming a woman in bed. That's why they don't see, don't hear, can't get the woman. They run away from the woman like they run away from the violator. So they always feel betrayed, tricked, because the woman brings alongside with her, he who violates and terrifies. The woman prepares, with her caresses, the painful invasion. And all the men, like my father, don't want to understand that they have still given in to their deliriums and nightmares, while they sleep with the woman. And I am tired of this history, I am tired of being the anonymous and false masturbation and I decided to speak up. Because the woman doesn't have to die! She doesn't need this! And I will do everything I can when I reenter this room to prevent her death. Even if it's written, even if it's been decided in someone's heart that she must die, I will break the frame and fight, fight with all my strength not to die, to continue existing there in front of everyone, beyond the

suffocated throat, beyond the word, the syllable, the sound that exceeds the noise of life leaving the body lost in the air. (The Chorus drags Actress C inside the room.) Because no woman should ever die, no one, on any stage! No woman should come on stage to die and be killed violently, as if this were the only thing left for her! Enough! You are really killing someone, for real, for real! Listen, listen, someone is being killed for real, for real, for real... (They silence actress C with a tape.)

C

Why isn't anyone capable of making this woman stop talking? I can't take it anymore! Iago, help me!

A

You know what to do! Everyone here is waiting!

C (Turns towards D, silenced by the tape and holds her face)

Why, huh, why did you do this? Who are you, tell me, who are you?

A

She won't say anything else. That's the best part...

(Actor B enters, drunk. C throws himself against him.)

C

What did you do to her? Come, Iago, dress me! (Iago brings Othello's character clothes to C. At the same time, A dresses as Iago. The Chorus takes seat as an audience pleased to hear and see the worst: the scene that takes place) I'm going to give this monster the suffering he deserves. May heaven forbid that I shall take evil from evil. Death hath awakened and dinner time hath past. (Actor C, cursing, beats B up, while actor A dresses actor B with Desdemona's sleeping gown. At the end, B is thrown unconscious on the bed. During the beating, D is able to get rid of the tape on her mouth and sings the Willow Song. After singing, she sits in a corner upstage and away from the center of the scene to observe, with horror, contrasting with the Chorus as audience, the distorted representation of the beginning of Scene II Act V of Othello, by Shakespeare. Iago holds a light so that Othello can do what has to be done.)

OTHELLO (Actor C)

It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul.

Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars,

She!!! Yet I'll not shed her blood,

Nor scar that whiter skin of hers, than snow,

And smooth as monumental alabaster.

Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.

Put out the light, and then put out the light.

(to the candle held by Iago)

If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
 I can again thy former light restore,
 (to actor B) But once put out thy light,
 Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
 I know not where is that Promethean heat
 That can thy light relume. When I have plucked thy rose,
 I cannot give it vital growth again,
 It must needs wither. I'll smell thee on the tree.

(Othello kisses B, a bite that spurts blood. He wakes up violently and contorts screaming and pulling on the sheets, but is held firmly by Iago that ties him up and gags him. Discouraged, ACTRESS D whispers her song. Othello takes off his shirt as if to engage in savage and violent sex. The Chorus gets excited and eats more popcorn, commenting on what will happen in the scene, wishing for the worst.

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
 Justice to break her sword (more terrible kisses.) One more!
 Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
 And love thee after. One more, and that's the last.
 So sweet was never so fatal. I must weep,
 But they are cruel tears. This sorrow's heavenly,
 It strikes where it doth love. – Wake up, bitch!

ACTOR A WHO PLAYS IAGO (Talking for Actor B who plays Cassio. He uses a woman's voice. He parodies the victim, making fun of her fears and honesty)
 Who's there? Othello?

OTHELLO
 Ay, you idiot!
 Or did you expect some other man?!!

IAGO
 Will you come to bed, my lord?

OTHELLO
 Have you prayed tonight, bitch?

IAGO
 Ay, my lord.

OTHELLO
 If you, bitch, bethink yourself of any crime
 Unreconciled as yet – to heaven and grace,
 Speak it now!

IAGO

Ay, my lord, I know nothing, nothing!!

OTHELLO

Well, do it, and be brief, bitch! (Walking around the bed, aiming for the strike, positioning Cassio's body, who will be put on all fours, with the help of Iago.)

I would not kill thy unprepared spirit,

No, heaven forbid, I would not kill thy soul, bitch!

IAGO

Talk you of killing? Killing?

OTHELLO

Ay, killing!

IAGO

Then heaven

Have mercy on me!

OTHELLO (his hand on his heart)

Amen, amen!

IAGO

If you say so, amen, with all my heart, but I hope you will not kill me!

OTHELLO

Hum!

IAGO (moaning)

And yet I fear you. For you are fatal then

When your eyes roll so. Why I should fear I know not,

Since guiltiness I know not.

OTHELLO

Think on thy sins.

IAGO

They are loves I bear to you.

OTHELLO

Ay, and for that thou diest.

IAGO

That death's unnatural that kills for loving.

Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?

Some bloody passion shakes your very frame.

There are portents. But yet I hope, I hope,
They do not point on me.

OTHELLO
Shut up, and be still!

IAGO
I will so. What's the matter?

OTHELLO
The bed, the sheets which I so loved and gave thee,
Thou gav'st to Cassio!

IAGO
No, by my life and soul!
Ask him!

OTHELLO
Shitty bitch, take heed,
Take heed of perjury: thou art on my death-bed. (jumps on the bed and gets behind Cassio, who is on all fours. He holds Cassio's neck with one hand and with the other, supports his body on Cassio's to engage in sexual movements)

IAGO
Ay, but not yet to die!

OTHELLO
Yes, presently:
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin!
For to deny each article with oath
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die!

IAGO
Isn't anybody gonna help me? (to the audience)

OTHELLO
Amen, amen!

IAGO
And have you mercy too. I never did
Offend you in my life, never loved Cassio
Or any other man with such warranty of heaven
As I love thee! Never, my lord, never!

OTHELLO

By heaven, I saw the bed, the sheets!!
Oh perjured bitch, thou dost stole my heart,
And makes me call what I intend to do
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice?!?
I saw, I saw!

IAGO

What hath thou seen, Othello?
What? What hath thou the desire to see?
Confess the truth!

OTHELLO

I already know the truth!

IAGO

What shall it be?

OTHELLO

That thou art a whore!

IAGO

What?

OTHELLO

A whore!

IAGO

No, thou did not say so!

OTHELLO

Hath my mouth stopped?
Honest Iago hath cleared mine eyes.

IAGO

O, my fear interprets. It's useless!!

OTHELLO (Pulls on Cassio's hair to lean for the sexual act)

Had all thy hairs been lives, my great revenge
Had stomach for them all!

IAGO

Alas! Thou art betrayed, and I undone!

OTHELLO

You bitch! Weep'st thou for him to my face?

IAGO

O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!

OTHELLO

Down, bitch!

IAGO

Kill me tomorrow, let me live tonight!

OTHELLO

Nay! Stay, dear!

IAGO

But half an hour, my God!

OTHELLO

It is too late. (Asphyxiates Cassio. The Chorus, who was following the action, frets and scatters, running across the stage in despair. The cry smothered down their throats, their faces shaking with an unexpressed plea, their eyes opened to the limit. Othello, gasping, collecting himself, hangs over the dead body of actor B who played Cassio dressed as Desdemona. Seeing the Chorus scatter, Othello is lost, as if awakened from his madness. Looks at Iago who turns his back at him. Othello, slowly, starts to understand that there is a corps between his legs. He pulls up his pants and ashamed dresses himself, looking at both sides in fear of being caught. Across D who plays Desdemona, with effort and hatred, tries with great pains to take the tape off of her mouth. Iago starts to laugh, repeating 'Idiot! Idiot!'. The Chorus, finally restructures itself in the form of a lynching battalion that throws itself against Othello in a fatal knockdown. In the midst of this lynching, Desdemona finally takes the tape off her mouth and drags herself to see Othello's destruction. The play ends with the sounds of her dragging and breathing, her effort to be there, her voice conspiring to stay alive. Fatigued, she whispers the Willow Song. From within the darkness of the shadows, Iago walks towards the audience with a sword in his hand and speaks.

IAGO:

Do I, by any chance, need a reason to have done what I did? Tell me! Answer me! Do I really need a reason? What if I just wanted to and that was it, huh? What if you, yes, you also wanted to? What do you want to do? Tell me! What about you? Isn't there anyone in the world, one single person that you would like to drive a sword into? One, just one. Think carefully, look around! Look! Seek! Don't stop! Continue! I am sure you will find someone! Come on, don't give up! There is at least one person, a single one waiting for all the attention you can give, all your care. Right now there is only one. Him. Her. And what are you waiting for? (Exiting upstage.) Do really need a reason for all this? Tell me, answer me: what if you just wanted to and that was it. One single person. To share with everyone. Everyone. Everyone.

THE END