



Macbeth Summary

In a thunderstorm, three witches decide to meet again on the heath "after the deed is done." Next, a captain reports to King Duncan that Macbeth beat Macdonwald in battle. Ross adds that the Thane of Cawdor was traitorous to Scotland during the battle. The three witches confront Macbeth and Banquo on their way home from the battle. They predict that Macbeth will be King of Scotland, and Banquo, though never king himself, will beget rulers. The witches leave and Ross informs Macbeth that he has inherited the title Thane of Cawdor (as also predicted by the witches). Macbeth contemplates the prediction of him being king, and wonders if he should help make it happen. Malcolm reports to King Duncan that Cawdor admitted his traitorous deeds at his execution. The king then warmly greets Macbeth and Banquo. To Macbeth's dismay, King Duncan declares his eldest son, Malcolm, Prince of Cumberland (i.e. the next king). At Inverness Castle, Macbeth's wife learns of his encounter with the witches and decides that she'll persuade Macbeth to fulfill his destiny through foul play. She then learns that King Duncan is coming to her castle to stay the night, strengthening her decision to murder Duncan. Macbeth appears and his wife tells him she'll do the foul deed herself. Duncan arrives and Macbeth tells his wife he doesn't want to murder Duncan. She talks him into it, adding that they'll frame Duncan's own guards with the murder.

Past midnight, Macbeth converses with Banquo, then alone, hallucinates that a bloody dagger is in front of him. Macbeth meets his wife and tells her he murdered Duncan. He also begins hearing voices. Macbeth forgets to return the daggers to the king's guards, so his wife does it for him, bloodying herself too, as Macbeth loses himself in insanity. They return to their chambers as Macduff and Lennox appear at the castle gates. Macbeth greets them and they ask to see Duncan. Macduff and Macbeth "discover" the body. Macbeth accidentally admits of the murder, then recants. Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, flee to England and Ireland, fearing for their own lives. Subsequently, Macduff and Ross discuss that all have decided that Malcolm and Donalbain bribed the guards to kill Duncan. Consequently, Macbeth is declared king.

At Scotland's castle (Forres), Macbeth contemplates how he fears Banquo may give breed to children who may overthrow Macbeth. Macbeth convinces (hires) to men to murder Banquo and his son, Fleance. Macbeth scares his wife by informing her of Banquo and Fleance's impending death. The murderers successfully murder Banquo, but Fleance escapes. At dinner, Macbeth imagines he sees Banquo's ghost causing his wife to excuse the dinner guests.

On the heath, The three witches make a brew chanting "double, double, toil and trouble." Macbeth approaches and asks three questions. The witches answer: 1. Beware Macduff, 2. None of woman borne will harm Macbeth, and 3. Macbeth will until Birnam Wood come to

Dunsinane Hill. Finally, the ghost of Banquo appears, showing his eight future royal offspring. Lennox and another Lord discuss that Macduff has gone to England to convince the innocent Malcolm to join arms with Northumberland and Siward against Macbeth. They inform Macbeth that Macduff has fled to England. Macbeth vows to fight them at Fife. Lady Macduff laments that her husband, a traitor, is virtually dead. Villains come and kill her son since he supports his father. In England, Macduff and Malcolm agree to fight together against Macbeth. Ross delivers the devastating news to Macduff that his son and wife are dead.

A doctor and servant observe Macbeth's wife's sleepwalking and sleep-talking about Duncan's death. Menteith, Angus, Caithness, and Lennox discuss the impending battle with Macbeth and Birnam wood. At Dunsinane Castle, Macbeth is informed that an army of 10,000 is near. At Birnam wood, Malcolm orders his soldiers to cut the trees and use them as disguises. In the castle, Macbeth learns that his wife has died by her own hand, then learns, to his dismay, that Birnam wood is "moving" toward the castle. The army arrives and Macbeth fights and kills young Siward. Next, Macduff and Macbeth fight. Macduff informs Macbeth that he (Macduff) was ripped from his mother's womb, and thus not born of woman. Soon after, Macduff kills Macbeth. Macduff then crowns Malcolm the new King of Scotland.

Hamlet Summary

Hamlet is the son of the late King Hamlet (of Denmark), who died two months before the start of the play. After King Hamlet's death, his brother, Claudius, becomes king, and marries King Hamlet's widow, Gertrude (Queen of Denmark). Young Hamlet fears that Claudius killed his own brother (Hamlet's father) to become king of Denmark, greatly angering Hamlet. Two officers, Marcellus and Barnardo, summon Hamlet's friend Horatio, and later Hamlet himself to see the late King Hamlet's ghost appear at midnight. The ghost tells Hamlet privately that Claudius had indeed murdered King Hamlet by pouring poison in his ear. Hamlet is further enraged and plots of how to revenge his father's death.

In his anger, Hamlet seems to act like a madman, prompting King Claudius, his wife Gertrude, and his advisor Polonius to send Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to spy on Hamlet and figure out why he is acting mad. Hamlet even treats Polonius' daughter Ophelia rudely, prompting Polonius to believe Hamlet is madly in love with her, though Claudius expects otherwise. Polonius, a man who talks too long-windedly, had allowed his son Laertes to go to France (then sent Reynaldo to spy on Laertes) and had ordered Ophelia not to associate with Hamlet. Claudius, fearing Hamlet may try to kill him, sends Hamlet to England. Before leaving, however, Hamlet convinces an acting company to reenact King Hamlet's death before Claudius, in the hopes of causing Claudius to break down and admit to murdering King Hamlet. Though Claudius is enraged, he does not admit to murder. Hamlet's mother tries to reason with Hamlet after the play, while Polonius spied on them from behind a curtain. Hamlet hears Polonius, and kills him through the curtain, thinking the person is Claudius. When finding out the truth, Hamlet regrets the death, yet Claudius still sends him to England, accompanied by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with orders from Claudius that the English kill Hamlet as soon as she arrives.

After Hamlet leaves, Laertes returns from France, enraged over Polonius' death. Ophelia reacts to her father's death with utter madness and eventually falls in a stream and drowns, further angering Laertes. En route to England, Hamlet finds the orders and changes them to order Rosencrantz and Guildenstern killed, as does occur, though Hamlet is kidnapped by pirates one day later. The pirates return Hamlet to Claudius (for a ransom), and Claudius tries one last attempt to eliminate Hamlet: he arranges a sword duel between Laertes and Hamlet. The trick, however, is that the tip of Laertes' sword is poisoned. As a backup precaution, Claudius poisons the victory cup in case Hamlet wins. During the fight, the poisoned drink is offered to Hamlet, he declines, and instead his mother, Gertrude, drinks it (to the objection of Claudius). Laertes, losing to Hamlet, illegally scratches him with the poisoned sword to ensure Hamlet's death. Hamlet (unknowingly), then switches swords with Laertes, and cuts and poisons him. The queen dies, screaming that she has been poisoned and Laertes, dying, admits of Claudius' treachery. Weakening, Hamlet fatally stabs Claudius, Laertes dies, and Hamlet begins his death speech. Though Horatio wants to commit suicide out of sorrow, Hamlet entreats him to tell the story of King Hamlet's death and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's deaths to all. Fortinbras, the prince of Norway, arrives from conquest of England, and Hamlet's last dying wish is that Fortinbras become the new King of Denmark, as happens.

Henry IV Summary

Continuing Richard II, Henry IV is now king and is fighting a revolt led by the Welshman Owen Glendower and the Percies. Henry IV wishes he could switch sons with Henry Percy, the Earl of Northumberland, whose son is Henry Percy (Hotspur), a valiant soldier. The third Percy is Thomas Percy, the Earl of Worcester and brother to Northumberland. Henry IV is mad at Henry V because Henry V hangs out with John (Jack) Falstaff (who calls Henry V, Hal) and Poin. At the tavern, Poin convinces Falstaff, Bardolph, and Peto to rob some travelers. Poin and Henry V plan to then rob Falstaff et. al. of the loot. Back at the palace, Henry IV demands that Hotspur turn over the Scottish prisoners he has. As insurance, Henry IV holds Hotspur's brother-in-law Mortimer as hostage (Hotspur's wife Kate is Mortimer's sister and Mortimer's wife is Glendower's daughter). Ironically, Mortimer was proclaimed heir to the English throne by Richard II, though Henry IV became king. The Percies explain to Henry IV that they are revolting because Henry IV has placed unreasonable demands on them, even after they helped him (as Bolingbroke) become king.

Returning to Falstaff et. al., they rob the king's transport then Poin and Hal rob them and Falstaff et. al. flee. At the pub, Falstaff makes up extravagant lies about the robbery. Hal rebukes him, proving Falstaff false. In jest, the two pretend to be King Henry IV and Hal and Hal (as Henry IV) tells Falstaff (as Hal) that the man Falstaff is a thief and Hal promises to banish him for his crimes. Moving to the revolt, Mortimer, Worcester, and Hotspur plan the revolt, overseen by Glendower. Oddly, Mortimer speaks no Welsh and his wife speaks no English, so her father interprets for them. Back to Henry IV, he criticizes Henry V for this deeds and associations. Henry IV tells Henry V that Hotspur is more deserving of the crown than Henry V, whereby Henry V vows to prove himself by killing Hotspur in battle. Back at the tavern we learn that Hal repaid the travelers whom the money was stolen from, and that Hal has arranged for Falstaff to lead some forces in the king's army.

Hotspur's father (Northumberland) becomes sick, greatly weakening the revolting forces since his men cannot attend the battle. This news, and Prince Hal's newfound leadership, and a report that Glendower will arrive late disheartens Hotspur, yet he overcomes these setbacks with renewed vigor. Falstaff, as military leader, hires very poor and unfit soldiers. Prince Hal and the Earl of Westmoreland observe this, but do nothing. Hotspur wishes to fight the first battle at nighttime, but delays after Sir Walter Blunt brings kind greetings from the king. Worcester meets the king the next morning, but no agreement is made, though the king offers to pardon all the revolters. Worcester, however, lies to Hotspur and tells him the king readies for battle, since Worcester does not believe Henry IV will pardon them and doesn't want Hotspur to back off. In battle, Archibald, the Earl of Douglas (Percies' side) kills Blunt, thinking Blunt is Henry IV due to a disguise. Henry V then rescues Henry IV from Douglas' sword. Falstaff and Douglas fight and Falstaff pretends to die. Henry V and Hotspur fight and Henry V kills Hotspur. Falstaff arises and stabs Hotspur in the leg, then claims to have killed him. Henry IV wins the battle (of Shrewsbury) and executes Worcester and Sir Richard Vernon, but lets Douglas go free. Henry IV also divides his power with Henry V and Hal's brother John of Lancaster. This is a play concerning honor, as reasoned by Falstaff.

Julius Caesar Summary

Marcellus and Flavius criticize the commoners for celebrating Caesar's recent military defeat of Pompey since they feel it's actually a sad day. During a victory march, a soothsayer warns Caesar to "Beware the Ides of March" (March 15); Caesar ignores him. A race is run, wherein Marc Antony, in the course of competing, touches Caesar's wife Calphurnia in hopes of curing her infertility. During the race, Cassius tries to convince Brutus that Caesar has become too powerful and too popular. Brutus neither agrees nor disagrees. Caesar confers with Antony that he fears Cassius is evil and worth fearing. Casca explains to Brutus and Cassius that shouting they heard was caused by Caesar's thrice refusal of a crown offered to him by Antony (though confusing, the commoners rejoiced that he had refused it for it indicated he is a noble man). At the third offering, Caesar collapsed and foamed at the mouth from epilepsy. Afterward, Caesar exiled/executed Flavius and Marcellus for pulling scarves off of Caesar's images (statues). In a thunderstorm, Casca meets Cicero and tells him of many ominous and fearful sights, mostly of burning images, he has seen. Cassius then meets Cicero and tells him the storm is a good sign of the evil he and his other cohorts plan to do to Caesar. It seems the senators plan to crown Caesar King, but Cassius aims to prevent it, or else commit suicide. Casca agrees to help Cassius. Cinna informs Cassius that Decius Brutus (actually Decimus), Trebonius, and Metellus Cimber will help them to kill Caesar.

Cassius is trying to convince Brutus to join too. Brutus, unable to sleep, tells himself that he fears Caesar will become a tyrant if crowned king. Cassius et al. come to Brutus and resolve to murder Caesar the next day (March 15). Metellus also convinces Caius Ligarius to join their cause. The men leave and Portia (Brutus' wife) begs Brutus to tell her what is happening, but he does not (though he does tell her before he leaves for the Senate). At Caesar's house, Calphurnia begs Caesar to stay home for fear of danger (based on a foreboding dream and the night's

storm). Holy priests pluck the entrails of an animal and find no heart in it, another bad sign. Caesar declares he will stay home, to calm his wife's fears. Decius, though, convinces Caesar to come to the senate. On the way, the soothsayer Artemidorus tries to warn Caesar of impending death, to no avail. At the Senate, Trebonius leads Antony away from Caesar, then the conspirators murder Caesar. They cover themselves in his blood and go to the streets crying, "Peace, freedom, and liberty." Antony comes back and mourns Caesar's murder. Antony pretends to support the clan, yet yearns for great havoc to occur as a result of the death. Brutus explains to the crowd that they killed Caesar because he was too ambitious. Antony replies with reverse psychology to incite the commoners to riot in grief over Caesar's murder. Antony also reads them Caesar's (supposed) will, wherein he leaves money to all the citizens, plus his private gardens. In the ensuing riots, Cinna the poet is wrongly killed by a mob that believes him to be Cinna the conspirator.

Antony forms a triumvirate with Octavius Caesar and Lepidus, to rule Rome. However, Brutus and Cassius are raising an army to defy them. Brutus learns that his wife Portia kills herself by swallowing hot coals. Messala tells Brutus that the triumvirate has killed 100 senators. Titinius, Messala, Brutus, and Cassius decide to confront Antony's army at Phillipi. At Brutus' tent, the ghost of Caesar comes and tells Brutus he will see him at Phillipi. The battle indeed ensues at Phillipi. Cassius confers to Messala that it is his birthday and that he fears defeat. In battle, Titinius is captured by Octavius. Cassius convinces Pindarus to help him commit suicide. Pindarus, in grief, flees after the deed is done. In a twist, Brutus overthrows Octavius and Cassius' army, defeating part of Antony's army. Titinius, in grief over Cassius' death, kills himself with Cassius's sword. The battle turns again, this time against Brutus' army. Cato is killed and Lucilius is captured, while pretending to be Brutus. Brutus successively asks Clitus, Dardanius, and Volumnius to help him commit suicide, yet all refuse. Brutus finally convinces Strato to hold the sword while he (Brutus) runs onto it and dies. Thus, Antony and Octavius prevail, while Cassius and Brutus both commit suicide, assumedly partly in grief over murdering Caesar.

King Lear Summary

In Britain, King Lear, in old age, chooses to retire and divide up Britain between his three daughters. However, he declares that they must first be wed before being given the land. He asks his daughters the extent of their love for him. The two oldest, Goneril and Regan, both flatter him with praise and are rewarded generously with land and marriage to the Duke of Albany and the Duke of Cornwall, respectively. Lear's youngest and most beloved daughter, Cordelia, refuses to flatter her father, going only so far as to say that she loves him as much as a daughter should. Lear, unjustly enraged, gives her no land. The Earl of Kent tries to convince Lear to reconsider, but Lear refuses then banishes Kent for acting traitorously by supporting Cordelia. Gloucester then brings the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy in and Lear offers Cordelia to Burgundy, though without a dowry of land, contrary to a previous agreement. Burgundy declines, but the French King, impressed by Cordelia's steadfastness, takes her as

Queen of France. Next, Lear passes all powers and governance of Britain down to Albany and Cornwall.

Edmund, bastard son of Gloucester, vows to himself to reclaim land his father has given to his "legitimate" son Edgar. Edmund does this by showing his father a letter he (Edmund) forged, which makes it seem that Edgar wants to take over his father's lands and revenues jointly with Edmund. Gloucester is enraged, but Edmund calms him. Later, Edmund warns Edward that he is in trouble with his father, pretending to help him.

Goneril instructs her steward, Oswald, to act coldly to King Lear and his knights, in efforts to chide him since he continues to grow more unruly. Kent arrives, disguised as a servant, and offers his services to Lear, who accepts. However, as a result of the servants' lack of respect for Lear, his own fool's derisions of him, and Goneril's ill respect toward him, Lear storms out of Goneril's home, never to look on her again. Lear goes next to Regan's house. While leaving, the fool again criticizes Lear for giving his lands to his daughters. Lear fears he (himself) is becoming insane.

At Gloucester's castle, Edmund convinces Edgar to flee, then wounds himself to make it look like Edgar attacked him. Gloucester, thankful for Edmund's support of him, vows to capture Edgar and reward Edmund. Regan and Cornwall arrive to discuss with Albany their ensuing war against Lear. Kent arrives at Gloucester's with a message from Lear and meets Oswald (whom Kent dislikes and mistrusts) with a message from Goneril. Kent attacks Oswald, but Cornwall and Regan break up the fight, after which Kent is put in the stocks for 24 hours. Edgar, still running, tells himself he must disguise himself as a beggar. King Lear arrives, finding Kent in the stocks. At first, Regan and Cornwall refuse to see Lear, further enraging him, but then they allow him to enter. Oswald and Goneril arrive, and Lear becomes further enraged. After Regan and Goneril chide Lear to the brink, he leaves Gloucester's castle, entering a storm. The daughters and Cornwall are glad he leaves, though Gloucester is privately concerned for his health.

In the storm, Kent sends a man to Dover to get Cordelia and her French forces to rescue Lear and help him fight Albany and Cornwall. Lear stands in the storm swearing at it and his daughters, but Kent convinces him to hide in a cave. Gloucester tells Edmund of the French forces and departs for Lear, but Edmund plans to betray his father and inform Cornwall of the proceedings. Kent finds Lear, nearly delirious, in the storm, and tries to take him into the cave. Just then, Edgar emerges from the cave, pretending to be a madman. Lear likes him and refuses to go into the cave. Gloucester arrives (not recognizing Edgar), and convinces them all to go to a farmhouse of his. Edmund, as promised, informs Cornwall of Gloucester's dealings with the French army. Cornwall vows to arrest Gloucester and name Edmund the new Duke of Gloucester.

At the farmhouse, Lear, growing more insane, pretends his two eldest daughters are on trial for betraying him. Edgar laments that the King's predicament makes it difficult to keep up his (Edgar's) charade, out of sympathy for the King's madness. Gloucester returns and convinces Lear, Kent, and the fool to flee because Cornwall plans to kill him. Cornwall captures

Gloucester and with Regan cheering him on, plucks out Gloucester's eyeballs with his bare fingers. During the torture, Gloucester's servant rescues his master from Cornwall and they flee to Dover to meet the French. On the way there, Gloucester and the servant meet Edgar (still a madman, named Poor Tom), who leads his father (Gloucester) the rest of the way.

At Albany's palace, Goneril promises her love to Edmund, since her husband (Albany) refuses to fight the French. Albany believes that the daughters mistreated their father (Lear). A messenger brings news that Cornwall is dead, from a fatal jab he received when a servant attacked him while he was plucking out Gloucester's eyeballs. Albany, feeling sorry for Gloucester and learning of Edmund's treachery with his wife, vows revenge.

At Dover, Cordelia sends a sentry out to find her estranged father. Regan instructs Oswald (Goneril's servant) to tell Edmund that she (Regan_ wants to marry him, since Cornwall is dead. Edgar pretends to let Gloucester jump off a cliff (Gloucester believes it truly happened), then Edgar pretends to be a different man and continues to help his father. Lear, fully mad now, approaches and speaks to them. Cordelia's men arrive and take Lear to her. Oswald comes across Edgar and Gloucester, threatening to kill them. Edgar, though, kills Oswald, and discovers by letter that Goneril plants to murder Albany and marry Edmund. At Cordelia's camp, King Lear awakes, more sane than before, and recognizes Cordelia.

At her camp, Goneril, while arguing with Albany, states to herself that she would rather lose the battle than let Regan marry Edmund. Edgar, disguised, brings warning of ill plots (by Goneril) to Albany. Lear and Cordelia are captured in battle by Edmund. Edmund sends them to jail and instructs a Captain to kill them. Edgar arrives and fights and wounds Edmund, who admits his treacheries to all. Goneril mortally poisons Regan, then stabs herself. Edmund reveals that he and Regan ordered the Captain to hang Cordelia and kill Lear. Lear then emerges with dead Cordelia, and tells all he killed the Captain that hung her. Edmund dies and King Lear, in grief over Cordelia, dies.

Othello Summary

In a street in Venice, the villain Iago complains to Roderigo that Othello the Moor chose Cassio to be his lieutenant, rather than Iago. Iago vows to stay loyal to Othello only as long as it works to his advantage. They then inform Barbantio that his daughter Desdemona is sleeping with Othello. Barbantio hesitates to believe them, since Roderigo has been an unwelcome suitor to his daughter, but he soon finds she is missing. At Othello's house, Cassio and other officers arrive summoning Othello to the Duke of Venice on urgent matters. Barbantio then arrives and orders Othello arrested, until he learns of the Dukes summons. At the Duke's chambers, Barbantio accuses Othello of using spells and potions to win Desdemona. He, however, proves this is not so, and Barbantio reluctantly blesses their marriage. We then learn that the Turkish fleet (the Ottomites) is sailing toward Cypress. The Duke asks Othello to go defend it, and Desdemona asks to come with. Othello asks Iago to take care of Desdemona and follow him to Cyprus. Roderigo laments to Iago that he has lost Desdemona since Othello has married her. Iago convinces Roderigo to make money by selling his lands and fighting in wars. Over time, Iago feels Othello will tire of Desdemona and she will again become available. Iago, for his own

part, reveals to the audience that he is only using Roderigo for his money. He also begins to plot his revenge against Othello for choosing Cassio.

At Cyprus, the governor Montano reports that a tempest has droned the Turkish fleet, effectively eliminating their threat. Next, Cassio arrives, then Iago, his wife Emilia, and Desdemona, and lastly, Othello. In private, Iago tells Roderigo he believes Desdemona is in love with Cassio, based on their flirting before Othello arrived. He convinces Roderigo to pick a fight with Cassio to get Cassio in trouble with the local authorities. Alone, Iago reveals his plans to make Othello jealous of Cassio and/or Roderigo for courting Desdemona. That evening, after supper, Othello and Desdemona head to bed, while Iago arrives with wine, hoping to get Cassio drunk. He does, then Roderigo eggs him on, and a fight ensues, pulling Montano into the melee. Othello breaks it up, and after Iago explains (pretending not to know Roderigo), Othello tells Cassio he is no longer his lieutenant. Privately, Iago convinces Cassio to entreat Desdemona to ask Othello to reinstate him. Alone, Iago reveals that he'll use their private meetings to convince Othello that Desdemona is disloyal.

At the Citadel (Othello's lodging), Cassio entreats Desdemona to help him. When Iago and Othello appear in the distance, Cassio leaves. Desdemona relays Cassio's penance, then leaves herself. Iago begins dropping hints of his "suspicions" about Cassio and Desdemona to Othello, to which Othello probes Iago for his thoughts, and Iago pretends to reluctantly reveal them. Thus, Iago plants the seed that Desdemona is being disloyal to Othello. All throughout, Othello keeps stating how he genuinely believes Iago is of "exceeding honesty". Iago leaves and Desdemona appears calling Othello to dinner. He, already becoming (wrongly) suspicious, is rude to her when she tries to cure his "headache" with her handkerchief, given to her by Othello as his first gift to her. They leave, and Emilia appears and picks up the handkerchief, remembering that her husband Iago has asked her to steal it repeatedly before. Iago appears and takes it from her; then privately states that he'll plant it at Cassio's room to fuel Othello's suspicions. Othello reappears, and reveals to Iago how greatly depressed he has become. Othello yells at Iago and demands proof of the suspicions which Iago has planted in his head. Iago then claims he has heard Cassio talk of his love for Desdemona in his sleep. Iago also claims he's seen Cassio wipe his beard with Desdemona's handkerchief. This being the final straw, Othello names Iago his lieutenant and orders Iago to kill Cassio within the next three days. As for Desdemona, Othello wishes her dead too. In her room, Desdemona and Emilia look for the lost handkerchief. Othello appears and claims to have a cold and asks to see it. Desdemona says she doesn't have it, but promises it is not lost. Othello, enraged, leaves. Cassio again appears and entreats Desdemona to talk to Othello. She tells him she has tried, but Othello has become irritable. Cassio's mistress Bianca appears and he asks her to copy the handkerchief he found in his room (Desdemona's), since he likes it, but fears someone will ask for it soon.

At his chamber, Iago eggs Othello on more as Othello slowly goes crazy, since Iago tells him Cassio admitted sleeping with Desdemona. Iago rejoices as Othello goes into a seizure/trance. Iago convinces Othello to hide while he questions Cassio about Desdemona. In reality, Iago plans to speak to Cassio about Bianca, eliciting laughter and smiles. Othello sees this and thinks they are talking about escapes with Desdemona. Bianca then appears, enraged, and throws the handkerchief at Cassio, accusing him of getting it from another lady. This, too,

Othello sees. After Cassio and Bianca leave, Iago comes to Othello and convinces him to strangle Desdemona in bed that night, while Iago promises to take care of Cassio. The noble Lodovico from Venice arrives at Cyprus and gives Othello a letter. Already angered, the letter enrages Othello as it orders him home to Venice and Cassio to remain in Cyprus, taking over Othello's command. Desdemona tries to calm him and he strikes her, shocking Lodovico. Iago tells him Othello has changed, but will not reveal more. At the citadel, Othello questions Emilia about Desdemona's honesty; she swears Desdemona is honest, though Othello summons Desdemona and accuses her of being disloyal and a whore, all while himself weeping. When Othello leaves, Desdemona summons Iago and Emilia to comfort her. Emilia tells Iago she believes an evil villain hath put the thoughts into Othello's head. Ironically, Iago replies "it is impossible". Separately, Roderigo comes to Iago complaining that he has given Iago all his jewels to give to Desdemona, and has seen no positive results from her. Iago calms him down and explains that Othello and Desdemona are leaving, by order of Venice, and Cassio will take over in Cyprus. However, Iago says, if Cassio were to die, Othello would have to stay in Venice, and Roderigo would be able to have Desdemona. Iago tells Roderigo to wait outside Bianca's house after midnight, then kill Cassio when he leaves. Iago promises to help, if necessary. At supper, Lodovico and Othello go on a walk, and Othello orders Desdemona to wait, alone, in her bedroom for him.

At night, in a street, Iago sets Roderigo up to kill Cassio. Iago thinks to himself that both must die, or his plotting will be revealed. Cassio appears and Roderigo attacks him, cutting off one of Cassio's legs, during which Cassio wounds Roderigo. Othello overhears Roderigo's cries for help and thinks Cassio is dead; he thus returns to Desdemona. Meanwhile, Iago, who had left, reappears to "investigate" the noise. Lodovico and Gratiano also come. Iago finds Cassio, who's still alive. Alone, he finds Roderigo and stabs him, assuring his death. Iago then "discovers" Roderigo and calls the others. Bianca appears and Iago accuses her of being in cohorts with Roderigo. He calls her a strumpet and takes her into custody. Othello then arrives back at Desdemona's chamber, ready to kill her, even though he still finds her beautiful. Despite her pleadings, he smothers her with a pillow, though she doesn't completely die. Emilia appears and tells Othello that Roderigo is dead, but Cassio is alive. She then hears Desdemona cry for help and tries to help her, but she dies. Emilia asks Othello why he killed her and he says Iago told him she had slept with Cassio. Montano, Gratiano, and Iago appear and Emilia accuses Iago of being a liar. He admits he told Othello Desdemona was sleeping with Cassio. Gratiano tells us Desdemona's father has died over the grief of losing her. Othello explains that Cassio had Desdemona's handkerchief, given to him by her, but Emilia laments that she found it and gave it to Iago. At this, Iago tries to kill Emilia, but Gratiano and Montano hold him back. Othello, in a rage, comes at Iago, but he escapes and kills his wife (Emilia), then flees. Montano and Gratiano take Othello's sword, then chase Iago. Othello finds another weapon, then Lodovico, Cassio, Montano, and Iago (captured) reappear. This time Othello wounds Iago, but is disarmed. All is revealed as letters explaining Iago's deeds were found on Roderigo, and he, when near death, confessed that Iago had put him up to attacking Cassio. In a closing speech, Othello pulls a hidden dagger and kills himself. Fittingly, Lodovico leaves Iago for Cassio to sentence and torture.

Romeo and Juliet Summary

In Verona, Sampson and Gregory (Capulet servants) complain that they will not put up with insults from the Montague family. Abram and Balthasar (Montague servants) appear and the four start quarreling. Benvolio (Lord Montague's nephew) appears and tries to break up the quarrel, but Tybalt (Lady Capulet's nephew) appears and picks a fight with Benvolio. At length, officers try to break up the fight, even while Lord Capulet and Lord Montague begin to fight one another. The Prince of Verona (Escalus) appears and stops the fighting, proclaiming sentences of death to any that renew the fighting. At Montague's house, he, his wife, and Benvolio discuss how melancholy Romeo (Montague's only son) has been lately. Benvolio vows to find out why. Speaking with Romeo, Benvolio finds Romeo is in love with a woman who has sworn to stay chaste (Rosaline). Benvolio suggests pursuing other women, but Romeo refuses. Separately, Paris (a kinsman of the Prince of Verona) talks to Lord Capulet about wooing his daughter Juliet for marriage. Capulet responds that she is too young (nearly 14 years old) and must wait two years to marry, and then only to the man whom she chooses. Still, Capulet invites Paris to a party in the evening. Capulet's servant is sent to invite guests, but he can't read the list so he entreats Romeo to do so. Upon hearing of the party, Benvolio convinces Romeo to attend and compare his unattainable love Rosaline to more beautiful women to get his mind off Rosaline. At Capulet's house, Lady Capulet speaks to Juliet about her feelings for marrying Paris while Juliet's Nurse listens on, telling stories of Juliet's childhood. Juliet, although hesitant, promises to be courteous. Masked, Romeo, Mercutio, and Benvolio head to the Capulet party. Romeo is still depressed, saying he dreamt a fearful dream of an untimely death that will result because of the evening's events, but Benvolio just makes fun of him. At Capulet's house, the Montagues attend the party (in masks), Romeo spies Juliet, and he falls in love with her. Tybalt sees Romeo and takes up arms, but Lord Capulet attempts to calm him, though Tybalt vows to revenge Romeo's intrusion the next day. Juliet, too, falls for Romeo, but falls into despair when her Nurse informs her Romeo is a Montague, as does Romeo when he learns Juliet is a Capulet.

While leaving the party, Romeo hides in the orchard while Mercutio and Benvolio call for him to come out of hiding and go home with them; yet he will not. After they leave, Romeo appears and speaks to Juliet under her window, saying "But soft! What light through yonder window breaks? It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!" By and by they swear their love to one another. Juliet tells Romeo she'll send a messenger to him the next day to learn the details of their wedding. Having stayed up all night, Romeo visits Friar Lawrence's cell and tells him of this new love for Juliet. Although Lawrence is critical at first, Romeo eventually convinces him to marry them. In the street, Benvolio tells Mercutio that Romeo did not come home that night, and that Tybalt has sent the Montagues a letter challenging Romeo to a duel. Romeo appears and they tease him for hiding from them. Juliet's nurse and servant Peter appear and Romeo tells her to tell Juliet to go to the Friar's cell that afternoon to be married. The Nurse returns to Juliet and, though she skirts around the message, she finally tells Juliet the wonderful news. Soon, at the Friar's cell, he marries Romeo and Juliet, and Romeo plans to visit Juliet's bedroom that evening.

At the street, Benvolio and Mercutio encounter Tybalt and Petruchio, leading to Tybalt and Mercutio fighting since Tybalt tries to pick a fight with Romeo, but he refuses. Romeo tries to break up the fight, but Tybalt slays Mercutio under Romeo's arm, then Tybalt flees. As Mercutio dies, he declares "A plague on both your houses," since he is only a friend of Romeo's and not his kinsmen. When Benvolio informs Romeo that Mercutio is dead, Romeo seeks out, fights, and slays Tybalt in revenge. Benvolio convinces Romeo to flee. The prince appears and Benvolio explains all to him, at which the Prince exiles Romeo for slaying Tybalt. At the Capulet's orchard, Juliet waits for Romeo when her Nurse appears and informs her of Mercutio and Tybalt's deaths, and Romeo's banishment. Juliet falls into despair, realizing she would rather Tybalt dead than Romeo, but also that a banished Romeo is virtually dead. At the Friar's cell, he informs Romeo of the Prince's edict of banishment, putting him into despair. Romeo states he would rather be dead than banished. The Nurse arrives and tells Romeo that Juliet is sad too, but forgives Romeo. Still, Romeo pulls a dagger and tries to kill himself, but the Friar

stops him and tells him to stay the night with Juliet, then flee to Mantua. At Capulet's house, he and Paris set the wedding date for Paris and Juliet to be three days hence. In Juliet's bedroom, Romeo says a tearful goodbye to Juliet. After he leaves, Lady Capulet appears and, while discussing Tybalt's death, states she will send a henchman to Mantua to kill Romeo (though she never does). She then informs Juliet of her impending marriage to Paris. Juliet tells her parents she will not marry, but Lord Capulet commands it will be so. The Nurse, too, tells Juliet she should marry Paris. In private, Juliet decides to no longer trust the nurse and vows to kill herself if the Friar cannot find a way to save her from marrying Paris.

At Friar Lawrence's cell, Paris informs the Friar of his upcoming wedding to Juliet. When Juliet arrives to see the Friar, Paris politely leaves. The Friar, hearing Juliet threaten suicide, tells her of a "distilled liquor" she can take to fake death. He explains the drug will keep her asleep and seemingly dead for 42 hours, during which she can be placed in the Capulet tomb. Then, when she wakes, Romeo can be there waiting for her to take her to Mantua. Friar Lawrence sends Friar John to Mantua with an explanatory letter for Romeo. Juliet returns to her father and apologizes for refusing to marry, causing her dad to move the wedding up to the next morning (two days early). In her bedroom, Juliet sends her mother and nurse away, then, after much worrying over the future, she drinks the vial of medicine and sleeps. Later in the early morning, all feverishly prepare for the wedding and Capulet sends the Nurse to wake Juliet. The Nurse wails upon finding Juliet "dead", summoning the others to find her and mourn. The Friar instructs all to prepare Juliet for her funeral.

In Mantua, Romeo's servant Balthasar arrives and tells Romeo that Juliet is dead. Romeo vows to see Juliet in her tomb and poison himself there, buying the poison from a poor Apothecary who illegally sells it to Romeo only because he (the Apothecary) needs the money. At Lawrence's cell, Friar John reports he could not deliver the letter to Romeo since he (John) got stuck in a quarantined house while searching for Romeo. Friar Lawrence heads to the cemetery with a crowbar. At the tomb, Paris and his page arrive and Paris mourns Juliet's death. Paris hides when he hears Romeo and Balthasar approach. Romeo orders Balthasar to leave him alone, no matter what he hears. When Romeo opens the tomb, Paris steps out and tries to stop him by provoking him to fight. Romeo entreats Paris to simply walk away and not fight, but Paris forces Romeo to fight him, resulting in Romeo slaying Paris. In sorrow, Romeo lays Paris in the tomb, while Paris' page secretly leaves to call the watch. Romeo finds Juliet and mourns her death, then drinks his poison and dies. Outside the tomb, Friar Lawrence arrives and meets Balthasar who tells the Friar that Romeo has been in the tomb for one half hour. Lawrence enters the tomb and finds Romeo and Paris dead. Juliet then awakes and spots Romeo. The Friar, upon hearing noises outside flees, leaving Juliet with Romeo. Juliet tries to kill herself with Romeo's poison, but can find none, either in the vial or on Romeo's lips. In desperation, she stabs herself with Romeo's dagger. The watch arrives, having found Balthasar and the Friar. The Prince and Lord and Lady Capulet arrive and learn Paris, Romeo, and Juliet are dead (amazingly to them, Juliet seems to have been alive, and then newly dead again). Lord Montague arrives and reports that his wife has died from grief over Romeo's exile, then learns himself of Romeo's death. Capulet and Montague make peace and swear to never fight again. They vow to build solid gold statues of Romeo and Juliet and place them side by side so all can remember their plight.