

# lago of othello

[Literature](#), [Character](#)



Iago of "Othello" What makes a good villain? What qualities make one villain stand out from another? Is it their demeanor, ruthlessness, or the methods that they employ to accomplish their tasks? In any case, a great villain must leave the reader with a respect for their methods and a question about their motives. In Shakespeare's Othello, there is one character in Iago that fulfills all of these qualifications. Iago is a wonderful villain because he gains other's trust, relentlessly takes advantage of his peers' flaws, and unapologetically causes the deaths of his counterparts in order to achieve his goals. The main weapon Iago used in his villainy was trust. Iago knew how to play to each character's personality to get them to believe what he said over anyone else's word, earning him the nickname "Honest Iago" in the play. He is able to get many people like Roderigo, Othello, and Cassio to confide in him and give him information that they would not divulge to anyone else. In Roderigo's case their relationship is established quickly in the play with these words of his: "That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse / As if the strings were thine should know of this." Also, Iago maintains close contact with Cassio and Othello throughout the play. Aside from being Othello's right-hand man throughout a majority of the play, he also has a level of comfort with Cassio. This comfort is shown in his willingness to talk about Desdemona when the two are on night patrol. This reliance was something Iago exploited each time he had a chance. Every time a desire was expressed, Iago was there with a solution that always benefited Iago in the end. For instance, it was Iago that suggested to Roderigo that he attempt to kill Cassio in order to get Desdemona to be interested in him. It was also Iago's work in stoking up the fires of revenge in Othello's belly regarding the

" affair" between Desdemona and Cassio. For each situation, every word that was said was for the advancement of Iago and the destruction of all others. Iago also acts as a contributor to each character's flaws in the play. For example, in act two, Iago influences Cassio to have some drinks in order to start a quarrel between Cassio and Roderigo. In another example, in act three, Iago gets Othello to believe that there is an affair between Desdemona and Cassio by building on the suspicions and doubts that Othello had before Iago even spoke to him. Finally, as the " smoking gun" that Othello was looking for, Iago presents the handkerchief to Othello along with a fabricated story about its whereabouts. These actions contribute to the eventual demise of all of these characters, but it also leads to Iago's downfall as well by making his lack of sympathy and compassion for anyone but himself his downfall in the end of the play. The third thing that makes Iago such a memorable villain is the result of his actions. Iago's wickedness directly or indirectly causes the deaths of Othello, Roderigo, Desdemona, and Emilia. Through his lies, deceit, and unfaltering malice, he manages to compel a good man in Othello to kill a woman that was loyal to him in Desdemona. He gets Roderigo and Cassio to fight before coming in and finishing the job by killing Roderigo. Iago then stabs Emilia for trying to expose him, but it is too late because he has already been exposed. Throughout the whole story, Iago had no remorse and the end of the play he showed this more than ever through the events that he instigated. What makes a good villain? A good villain must optimize all or most of the dark side of the human soul: the lies we tell, the misleading we sometimes do, and the painful consequences for those actions. In Othello, we are able to see all of these elements in Iago and

we also get to witness the tragic consequences that come when we choose to stray from our innate moral ground. A good villain should teach us a lesson even if that lesson was lost on the villain himself.