

Tragedy of othello

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



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Who or what is responsible for the tragedy in Othello? In Shakespeare's Othello almost every character ranging from Brabantio to Emilia is somewhat responsible for the tragedy, emotions are also at play in the tragedy.

Essentially the main person or later referred to as a "devil" is Iago, the fiendish manipulator pulling the strings. Throughout the play Iago jumps at any attempt to sabotage Othello and Desdemona's relationship and quite literally anyone who gets in his way including his own wife Emilia, whom he later stabs in a final act of cowardice and Michael Cassio who holds the rank of lieutenant, which is essentially what Iago wants. Iago starts derailing Othello at the very beginning of the play by going to Brabantio and trying to stir him and turn him against Othello, this is shown by his many animal epithets such as "Even now, very now an old black ram is tupping your white ewe." - Act 1 scene 1 lines 88-89. He continues these charades even in Cyprus and continues until the end. Emilia played a huge part in the downfall as well. Although her marriage to Iago seems extremely rocky and the amount of disrespect Iago shows towards her, she helps Iago by giving him the handkerchief when it's dropped by Desdemona in Act 3. The handkerchief was supposedly created by a gypsy and given to Othello's mother, whom used it to woo his father and upon dying gave it Othello and bid him to give it to his mistress so they would stay together. Upon finding out the role she played in the death of Desdemona, Emilia is absolutely disgusted by Iago and confronts Othello, telling him that she found the handkerchief and gave it to Iago who planted it in Cassio's quarters. "She gave it Cassio? No, alas, I found it, And did give't my husband." Act 4 scene 2 lines 231-232. She is mortally wounded by Iago shortly after. Roderigo was

another character who was manipulated by Iago immensely. Towards the start of the play Roderigo wants to drown himself upon finding out that Desdemona married Othello, but is told to “ Put money in thine purse” by Iago, who was quite literally taking money and whatever he could out of Roderigo. The fool follows through with all of Iago’s plans to sabotage Cassio such as engaging him in a brawl once he was drunk which causes him to be demoted, Iago promoted and himself wounded. It seems that Roderigo’s idiocy knows no bounds in the play, when he finds out Iago’s been playing him all along he threatens to kill Iago, but upon Iago complementing him, “ Why, now I see mettle theres mettle in thee...” Act 4 scene 2 line 205. Roderigo then embarks on a mission to kill Cassio with the help of Iago, ultimately to be killed by Iago. By getting Cassio demoted, it lead to Cassio asking Desdemona to help speak kind words to Othello in his favour, therefore allowing Iago to “ inform” Othello that Desdemona fancy’s Cassio. Cassio and Desdemona’s part in the tragedy was their naivety, they are both young and as a result are somewhat flirtatious as seen in Act 2, and Cassio’s well mannerism gives only more for Iago to go on, informing Othello that Cassio was holding Desdemona’s hand and whispering words of love in her ear. Once Cassio is demoted he seeks help from Desdemona under the advice of “ honest” Iago, which leads feeds Othello’s jealousy all the more. Desdemona herself should’ve seen that Othello was already upset and shouldn’t have pleaded Cassio’s case so much. Perhaps if she was a little more assertive as well, denying the accusations with more force and backing herself up she mightn’t of have such a tragic ending. Brabantio also plays a rather large part as he sows the very first seed of doubt in Othello’s mind

about Desdemona by saying “ Look to her, Moor, Have a quick eye to see: She has deceiv’d her father, may do thee. ” Act 1 scene 3 lines 292-293. It was this very first seed that allowed Iago’s manipulation to course through so smoothly. Othello is of course the second of the three main things before his own downfall, the first being Iago. Throughout several points in the play, Othello could of quite easily told Iago to shut up and stop talking rubbish, but he doesn’t and instead allows himself to be manipulated by Iago showing his true weakness in character, of course one thinks to themselves, how can such a great general be such a fool? But that’s where suspension of disbelief kicks in. By scene 4 Othello is so consumed by his own jealousy and Iago’s manipulation that he kills his love Desdemona, “ Put out the light, and then put out the light” Act 4 scene 2 line 7. That final act completes the downfall of Othello, following the theme of many Shakespearean plays. The third musketeer of mayhem is jealousy, the green eyed monster. It was jealousy that ultimately lead to Othello’s downfall. One can also argue that it was Othello’s jealousy that was the cause, but jealousy is a human trait, and can be classified as a thing on it’s own. Ironically Iago warns Othello of jealousy, “ O, beware jealousy; It is the green-ey’d monster, which doth mock that meat it feeds on. ” Act 3 scene 3 lines 169-171. These for me, were the main causes of the tragedy of Othello, still one does not see what motivated Iago for so much damage and to so many, He does however state that he hates the moor because he promoted Cassio instead of him and because he suspects Emilia had been unfaithful with Othello, “ I hate the moor, and is thought abroad, that twix my sheets he’s done my office; I know not if’t be true...” Act 1 scene 3 lines 384-386.