

Contemptuous notions at work

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Contemptuous Notions at Work In William Shakespeares " Othello, The Moor of Venice" play, there are several motifs of power, jealousy, contempt, and even well-disguised hatred. There are also underlying innuendoes in the story that suggest or prompt the reader to feel the same as the character that they are reading about and who they are speaking of. Upon reading the opening act, as Iago speaks with Roderigo, there are hints of Iago's jealousy toward Cassio for being appointed as Officer, and a slight contempt for Othello as well. Even though Iago's statement of being " Christened and heathen, must be beled and calmed by debtor and creditor. " (1. 1. 31) To be read as Christian and heathen, the reader is not aware at this point of just how devious and manipulative Iago will become and he will eventually be the downfall of Othello, along with others that seem to be pawns in his malicious game. Othello does obviously hold a certain type of power with his position, but it is that position that allows him to meet Desdemona through her father. Desdemona is mesmerized by the stories that Othello shared while on these visits to her father's home as Othello testified to the Council, " She loved me for the dangers I had passed, And I loved her that she did pity them. " (1. 3. 170). Othello was bid by the council because they trusted him to handle the state of affairs with the Turkish. Now enter Cassio who was appointed as Othello's officer, a reader would assume that he also held a certain amount of power if even just by the position that others would look up to him. When Iago finds out that Othello has married Desdemona he finds this as an opportunity to set his revenge and despicable scheme in place that has originated from his jealousy of Cassio and his contempt for Othello. Throughout the entire play Iago seems intent on destroying Othello and has

no compassion for the people that get hurt along the way. It was through Iago's jealousy that he plants doubts about Desdemona to Othello "O beware my lord, of jealousy. It is the green eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on." (3. 3. 178) and after planting the seed he then tells Othello to "Scan this thing no farther" (3. 3. 261) knowing that the damage had already been done and having placed it there it would manifest and grow as it does with him. Even though Iago has masterminded and one handedly set so many people apart with his trickery and manipulation, he is not the only one to blame here. There seems to be so much miscommunication or really none at all between the characters that with the just the slightest communication the outcome could have been so different. If Othello had communicated with Desdemona prior to making up his mind about killing her she may have lived. The communication that needed to be there wasn't there until after he had killed her. After finding her mistress dead, Emilia began putting the pieces together and it was then that Othello realized that he had made a horrible mistake; one that cannot be undone. Othello had already had it set in his mind that he would kill her prior to bringing it up with her and asking her about it. Although he questioned Emilia about Desdemona and Cassio and she told him the truth as she knew it but he was too far gone at that point with the idea and notions that she was cheating. The jealousy just ate at him and once your mind is set on something or has convinced you of something, your reasoning skills tend to be inhibited. Othello brought about his own misery as well with having not enough confidence, security and self-esteem that he so readily and easily believed what was being presented to him. The manipulation that is

portrayed in this play is something of what one would describe as grossly competent and accomplished way more than what Iago set out to be done. It was not just the demise of Othello but also that of several people.

Relationships severed by the acts of one person. Desdemona was dead, Emilia was dead. Othello had to have felt a great sense of humility on learning the truth in the end. Works Cited Kennedy X. J., and Dana Gioia, eds. Backpack Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 2012. Print. Shakespeare, William. Othello, The Moor of Venice. Backpack Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing. Ed. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 2012. 762-875. Print.