

The play "the merchant of venice" by william shakespeare

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The play " The Merchant of Venice" by William Shakespeare is a tragic-comedy in that the " Merchant of Venice" concentrates on the happier aspects of life such as love, friendship, marriage as well as the harsher side of life such as death and fatal flaws. I found it interesting to focus on the character of Shylock as his weaknesses affect all the other characters in the play.

Shylock's flaws greatly affect the other characters in the play and Shylock's main weakness is his greed for money and jewels. He shows this in the play when he loses his daughter. He is more worried about the money she has stolen from him and not really concerned for her safety

" A diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats" " she is damned for it"

This greed for wealth and money affects other characters in the play and, in my opinion it affects Antonio most as Shylock insists

" Let the forfeit be nominated for an equal pound of your fair flesh"

Shylock shows how greedy he is for money as he is willing to commit murder for money. The greed Shylock has for money affects his daughter when she runs away with his money, Shylock ostracises her and wishes she were dead saying in an angry tone.

" I would my daughter was dead at my foot"

Shylock's second weakness is his lack of mercy for his fellow man. He believes he is on the side of the law but discovers that mercy can help you

instead of making things worse. Shylock discovered this in the court of Venice where he refuses to give mercy to Antonio and is punished for it.

" How shall thou hope for mercy rendering none"

The character greatly affected by this weakness is again Antonio. Antonio is in debt to Shylock for one pound of his flesh, but Shylocks lack of mercy is only an excuse to avenge the disappearance of his daughter and his treatment at the hand of Christians.

" There is no power in the tongue of man to alter me: I stay here on my bond"

Shylocks hard heartedness gets him nowhere in the end. In the courtroom shylock is seen sharpening his knife and balancing his scales before the judge has passed verdict.

(Bassanio) " Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly"

(Shylock) " To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there"

This intimidation enrages the characters around Shylock especially Bassanio and Gratiano and causes them to explode with outrage.

" O, thou be damn'd inexecrable dog!"

To me shylock's need for revenge is understandable as he is a Jew in a Christian city and because of this he is persecuted. He is spat upon in the street, mocked in public and disgraced because of his business. Shylock

believes that he is being treated as his " tribe" have been throughout time. These actions have built up inside Shylock and because of this he seeks revenge against the Christian Antonio.

" I hate him for he is a Christian" " If I catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him."