

Othello

Literature, Russian Literature



Love is force that overcomes large obstacle but can easily be tripped up by small ones. Love is eternal, yet derailed and a playwright that betrays this perfectly is William Shakespeare in his tragedy "Othello". Providing Othello with intensity but not direction proves the difficulty that occurs through this overwhelming emotion. Shakespeare show different types of loves and what it means through his use of different characters.

Love is a significant theme in this play and it first appears in the meeting of the two search parties, each seeking Othello for a different reason thus bringing the relations of Othello and Desdemona into prominence. The difficulties of love are seen to begin at this point when Desdemona's father accuses Othello of using witchcraft:

Damned as thou art, thou hast enchanted her: For I'll refer me to all thins of sense, f she in chains of magic were not bound

Brabantio cannot believe that Desdemona would have willingly married Othello had he not cast a spell on her. In other words, a black man has nothing to recommend him to a white woman - even with being the respected military commander of the Venetian army that he is, Barbantio does not believe his daughter would fall for such a man. During this Venetian period Venice

From the beginning we get a deep insight to another key theme of the which is racial prejudice. In the opening section before we are introduced to Othello he is never named and his descriptions are used to enhance the stereotype held in the venetian period. This effectively makes us feel threatened before even meeting him. Iago state " Even now, now, very now an old black ram/ Is

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tapping your white ewe." This use of animal imagery further enhances how in that time it was wrong for a white woman to fall in love with an older black man thus causing more problems for Desdemona and Othello's relationship.

The love between Othello and Desdemona begins to badly deteriorate with Iago's manipulative ways towards Othello. Iago's villainous ways are revealed to us through his plotting of revenge against Othello for not choosing him to be lieutenant and this is essentially the reason for what happens in the denouement of the play

Immediately as Iago explains his tactics to Roderigo, we are given a foreshadowing insight to his future betrayal of Othello. He is not following Othello out of "love" or "duty" but purely because he wants to plot against him and destroy the loving relationship that Othello and Desdemona have. We begin to see a completely different side to Othello as he allows himself to be poisoned completely by Iago thus showing us an aggressive and jealous Othello who allows his negative emotions to get the better of him.

Iago tries to convince Othello that his "sweet Desdemona" has been unfaithful and is having an affair with his good friend Cassio. The handkerchief is very significant in this course of events and it begins with Emilia's announcement:

I am glad I have found this napkin.

This was her first remembrance from the Moor,

My wayward husband hath a hundred times

Wooed me to steal it, but she so loves the token

For he conjured her she should ever keep it—

That she reserves it evermore about her

To kiss and talk to. I'll ha' the work ta'en out,

And give't Iago.

This is the biggest revelation of the play and the fact that Iago "hath a hundred times/Wooed me to steal it" immediately tips off the audience to the handkerchiefs' imminently prominent place in this tragic sequence of events. The handkerchief stands for a lot in Desdemona and Othello's relationship as it was Othello's first gift to her and it represents their oldest and purest feelings for one another. As soon as Othello hears that Cassio has possession of a gift of that much importance to him the climax of the play is reached.

The denouement of the play is extremely dramatic when Othello enters the room in which Desdemona is sleeping in with a determination to kill her. Othello states "that whiter skin of hers than snow," this metaphor highlights Desdemona's innocence, as does comparing her to a "light" to be put out. Othello covers the terribleness of what he is about to do with the use of many of these poetical metaphors thus showing the viewer that he is still in love with her. After smothering her he does not want to admit that Desdemona is dead; he speaks to her, ponders her stillness, and seems very hysterical. He is also grieved by this action and says "methinks it should be

now a huge eclipse of sun and moon," this refers back to the light/dark imagery of the play to communicate how unsettled and unhinged he feeling at that moment and he ends up committing suicide.

The fall of a proud and dignified man because of some difficult circumstances that is involved with loving someone elevates some pain in the viewers. Shakespeare has successfully written a play that is somewhat relatable to today's public. If there is something that you are so passionate for you try your best to keep and not allow difficulties affect it, but sometimes that is not possible and whatever it is, it has to be let go.