

Downfall of othello

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Downfall of Othello Humans feel the need to interact with one another, to fulfil this need humans build relationships. These relationships can either bring great joy or can become the very cause of human frailty. In the play 'Othello' by William Shakespeare we witness the downfall of the main character Othello and the underlying factors which lead to his downfall. One of the main factors is the relationships he had with others. The relationship between Othello and Iago is built on friendship. The basis of this relationship is built on loyalty and trust under the main scheme of revenge. On one side is Othello's complete faith and trust in Iago. While on the other side is Iago's pretence of love and loyalty which is suppressed by feelings of jealousy, anger and hate. Iago strategized a well structured plot to destroy Othello. Iago's hatred for Othello came about when Cassio got appointed the position of lieutenant which Iago believed he rightfully deserved for he is more experienced than Michael Cassio who has " never set a squadron in the field, nor the division of a battle knows more than a spinster" unless he seeks the " bookish theoretic". Iago makes it his mission to punish Othello for his supposed betrayal and make Cassio and Desdemona the subject of revenge. The main weakness in Othello is his trustworthy nature from which derives other weaknesses, all of which ultimately leads to his downfall. Othello's trustworthy nature is a weakness in his character; it is this characteristic which Iago preys on. " the Moor is of a free and open nature, that thinks men honest that but seem to be so, and will as tenderly be led by th'nose as asses are" His trusting nature makes him a target to manipulation and betrayal. Othello became delusional in Iago's ' supposed' friendship. Trusting someone too much makes us frail as we often lose the ability to make clear

judgements and decisions because we are under someone else's influence. Othello's trust in Iago outweighs his trust in Desdemona as Othello's suspicions are solely based on Iago's words. This shows how little faith he has in Desdemona as he required no further inquiry from Desdemona herself on these accusations against her. It is also human nature to be jealous and suspicious but one's ability to overcome the poison of jealousy determines one's strength in character. Othello failed to overcome his jealousy and being corrupted by Iago's poisonous accusations against Desdemona he started to put all his trust in his 'friend', his 'ensign' Iago therefore acting upon human nature by trusting the 'friend' rather than the object of suspicion. Othello is of a trusting nature and Iago is well aware of this. He uses this knowledge to his own advantage "in following him [he] follows but [himself]... not for love and duty but seemingly for [his] peculiar end". The relationship between Othello and Desdemona is built on love. This love is both his strength and his ultimate weakness. Othello loves Desdemona for the compassion and understanding she bestowed on him. She loved him for the wars he had fought, for the hardships he'd been through. Under Iago's spell of manipulation Othello begins to suspect that Desdemona's committed the act of infidelity, "O curse of marriage, that we can call these delicate creatures ours and not their appetites" these suspicions turn into jealousy and rage which overpowers his love. Jealousy is the bitter feeling of hate and hostility which can become one of the most powerful obsessions of human life. Jealousy is the poison which is brought by an addiction which is caused by love. It has the power to destroy everything that we have spent so long in gaining. It can destroy one's confidence in themselves, it can destroy the

foundations of one's character and it destroys the relationships that humans have with others. Love is the potion that humans intake and this turns to jealousy that corrupts the human mind, makes us frail and eventually destroys us. Othello's fear of losing Desdemona causes him to act out of character. In the beginning he was convinced that it was his courage and nobility that won Desdemona's heart but now he is forced to believe that she will leave him because he has more flaws than beauty. He says "haply for I am black and have not those soft parts of conversation that chamberers have, or for I am declined into the vale of years- yet that's not much- she's gone, I am abused and my relief must be to loathe her". Here he is pointing out his flaws, all those imperfections that had not bothered him before he is now noticing. This is a contrast to the man we witnessed at the beginning that stood confidently in front of Desdemona's father, Brabantio and the Duke and Senators declaring the reasons for why Desdemona fell in love with him. "she loved me for the dangers I had pass'd, and I loved her that she did pity them". He now lacks confidence for he is comparing himself with the likes of others, thinking that he is not good enough for Desdemona. His suspicions led him to analyse the reasons for why Desdemona may leave him. He started to analyse the external beauty which he felt he lacked. These external factors are the opposable reasons for why Desdemona This is a revelation of his insecurities and his lack of faith and trust in the woman he 'loves'. He loves Desdemona so excessively that the thought of her being with someone else makes him so overwhelmed that he falls down into epilepsy. He was spiritually and in his body completely exhausted and the cause of this exhaustion was love. The trust built by love had been destroyed

by Desdemona's ' supposed betrayal'. It is this love, a love which implies for him life or death that had been betrayed. It is our weaknesses that hurt us and ultimately destroys us. Our failure to distinguish between the masks and the true identities of others makes us weak. It gives people reason to use us to attain their own benefits. Othello's failure to distinguish between Iago's mask of love in friendship and Desdemona's true love resulted in othello's downfall for he lost all that he possessed due to his inability to distinguish between the two. I believe that one of the main factors that led to his downfall was the conflict that he faced within himself; his character. It is his love for Desdemona against which Othello struggles with all the time. His love for Desdemona is a test in character.