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# Theme Of Betrayal In William Shakespeare's Works

## Loyalty vs Betrayal

If people can be honest and loyal with each other about everything, that's possibly the biggest key to success. But what if one were to get poison in the mind and became suspicious of things with no evidential proof or witnesses? During the entire play of "Othello, the Moor of Venice" written by William Shakespeare, every character is either betrayed or prove loyal as manipulations flows caused by a complex antagonist known to be Iago, and uses this technique upon Othello for various reasons. Despite that, he ends up betraying all the people closest to him.

To begin with, Iago's betrayal starts off from the beginning to end of Act I, saying "Thus do I ever make my fool my purse...I hate the Moor;/ And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets/ H'as done my office: I know not if't be true;/ But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,/ Will do as if for surely" (i.3.363-370). Shakespeare may makes Iago's motif very unclear, which can be argue that this is a way for Iago to make an excuse of saying he hates Othello because of the suspicion of an affair between him and Emilia. However, the actual reason is simply to destroy Othello due to promoting Cassio as lieutenant instead of him. Therefore, Iago deals with the characters of the play in a pace that no one seems to know nor the meaning behind his actions other than a trustworthy man.

For instance, Iago may be known to be "honest" in front of his acquaintance, yet he tends to find necessarily things and made false statement that leads to misunderstanding circumstances. For example, when the setting switched from Venice to Cyprus in Act II, Iago decided to use Desdemona to get his revenge upon Othello, although aside he "do love [Desdemona] too,/Not out of absolute lust.." (ii.1.263-2640). But with the thought of Othello sleeping with Emilia, it gnawed Iago's mind, in which he won't be satisfied until he get even with Othello, wife for wife. With the help of a supportive character who's infatuated with Desdemona carrying out his plan accordingly, then he'll have power over Cassio by saying bad things about him to Othello, along with the affair between him and Desdemona that was known to be false. "That Cassio loves her, I do well believe't./ That she loves him, tis apt and a great credit..Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me/ For making him egregiously an ass" (ii.1.258-280).

The shenanigan of Iago comes in further play when he got Cassio drunk and faced an unexpected event, to which Montano tries to stop Cassio but was injured instead. With Othello taking control of the situation, Iago claim that as he retrieved from chasing after the Roderigo (to

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whom he didn't refer by name), he heard "clink and falls of swords,/ And Cassio high in oath [with Montano]..for a brief- At blown and thrust," or in other words nearly killing each other as how Othello witnesses the scene (ii.3.211-215). This leads Othello to falling for Iago's trap on softening the story out of honest affection for Cassio. Yet however, Cassio was dismissed from his service and proceed to gain his lieutenantship back with the help of the Desdemona. Ironically jokes about the fact of his villainy actions, Iago finds it easier to convince Othello that the affair of Cassio and Desdemona is true.

Like a true evil genius, Iago continuously plays upon Othello's fear and reinforces those fears with lies, causing raging yet confusion to him, to which he find himself disliking Desdemona when she advocates on Cassio's behalf and initiates the conversation throughout the play. With the disappearance of the handkerchief that Othello has given to Desdemona, it was passed down to various characters and created conflict that has a fit in Iago's plan. With the feeling of jealousy when hearing from Iago that Cassio has used it, along with his sleep-talking dreams about Desdemona, Othello regretted his own marriage, aside with Iago mocking the language of love and marriage by saying "I am your own for ever" (iii.4.480). This then leads to the cause of death and tragedy for the fair innocent Desdemona, who was suffocated in her chamber by Othello, and Othello stabbing himself when knowing the truth behinds, the lies of Iago.

It may argue that Iago is loyal at certain points of the play. However, with Shakespeare making him so complex, it could be misinterpreted, especially with Iago manipulating the characters easily even when his betrayal was obviously stated in his soliloquies. Nevertheless, he uses Roderigo to help him with his plan on revenge towards Othello. But with Roderigo knowing he has been deceived and decided to go at his own pace, Iago killed him at the end of Act V since he's the only one who knows what was going on compared to the rest of the other roles of the play.

Overall, loyalty and betrayal is like a universal theme throughout William Shakespeare's "Othello, the Moor of Venice." With trading your integrity and not having dignity in life, that's where failure comes. Therefore, there are eyes to see and ears to hear that needs to convince an individual when it comes to gaining trust and the quality of being loyal to someone.

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