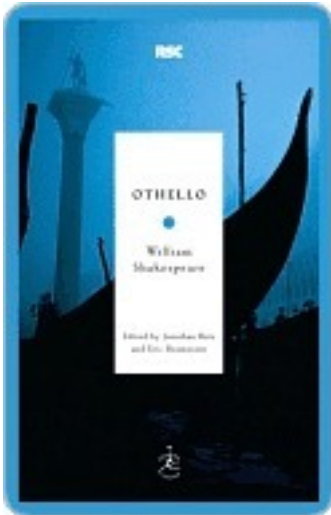

William Shakespeare

Othello



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Description

In *Othello*, Shakespeare creates a powerful drama of a marriage that begins with fascination (between the exotic Moor Othello and the Venetian lady Desdemona), with elopement, and with intense mutual devotion and that ends precipitately with jealous rage and violent deaths. He sets this story in the romantic world of the Mediterranean, moving the action from Venice to the island of Cyprus and giving it an even more exotic coloring with stories of Othello's African past.

Shakespeare builds so many differences into his hero and heroine—differences of race, of age, of cultural background—that one should not, perhaps, be surprised that the marriage ends disastrously. But most people who see or read the play feel that the love that the play presents between Othello and Desdemona is so strong that it would have overcome all these differences were it not for the words and actions of Othello's standard-bearer, Iago, who hates Othello and sets out to destroy him by destroying his love for Desdemona.

As Othello succumbs to Iago's insinuations that Desdemona is unfaithful, fascination—which dominates the early acts of the play—turns to horror, especially for the audience. We are confronted by spectacles of a generous and trusting Othello in the grip of Iago's schemes; of an innocent Desdemona, who has given herself up entirely to her love for Othello only to be subjected to his horrifying verbal and physical assaults, the outcome of Othello's mistaken convictions about her faithlessness.

Insightful reviews

Adam Florida: 12/9/13 2 stars: Probably some good fodder for reader response theory here. I just couldn't get into it this time--probably because I've got so much else going on right now. But come one, the master playwright surely could have come up with some more subtle plot points for key moments: Othello simply and conveniently drops the handkerchief (that is later oh-so-precious) in front of Emilia after she has been instructed to nab it; Othello has a grand mal seizure just so Iago can setup a conversation with Cassio; everyone is sooooo blind to "honest Iago's" true nature. Just couldn't buy it all this time around.

1/13/13 4 stars: Moor readings (get it?) inevitably = more appreciation of the irony drenching every line. This time an astute student inspired me to focus more on Desdemona's character than Iago or Othello's. What kind of woman is she? She certainly is the seducer in the couple's relationship, and she willfully deceives her father. Until she becomes the accused, she talks back to Othello and exerts her will over him (to her detriment, she won't stop bugging him about Cassio). In the end, though, she completely conforms to gender conventions: she tells Emilia that she could not even conceive of a woman who would practice infidelity, and, in her dying breath, she even takes culpability. Is she not actually as headstrong/independent as she earlier seemed? Or is this only a final demonstration of her true, true love of another? As with most things in the play, things are not what they seem. This time, I just wonder if I am being deceived by Desdemona's seemingly-dichotomous traits.

5/4/10 4 stars: As usually happens when I re-read Shakespeare, I am loving this more and

more. EVERY line is so perfectly crafted, especially Iago's. I could pause after every passage and discuss it with my class, but we'd never finish the play.

Iago's deception is brilliant--he is the puppet-master behind the scenes manipulating EVERY action, but not actually acting himself. His cynical and duplicitous nature allows him to revel in turning every character's most noble trait against him, begging the question: How valuable are silly morals/passions like love, honor, allegiance? They are not tangible (like money) and can be easily corrupted as Iago proves. He is the arch-villain of arch-villains; Othello even wonders, at the end, if Iago is Satan himself.

What is Othello's tragic flaw: jealousy or lack of self-esteem? Hopefully, I get some interesting papers on the topic.

Jonathan:

In my opinion, Othello focuses upon one of Shakespeare's great literary devices. The misunderstandings between characters fuel this intelligent plot and provide grounds for Shakespeare to tantalize his audience. We the reader (or the viewer) recognise that of course Desdemona is innocent and that Iago is the mischief maker in the plot. And so to build suspense Shakespeare dangles this information tantalisingly in front of our very noses.

The one problem I have with Othello is the nature of its characters. It was easy enough to see from a glance that Othello did not truly love Desdemona. If he did then why did he rush to convict her of being unfaithful to him? Particularly when the only evidence he possessed was not solid but rather based on the account of one man: Iago. Because he rushed into marriage it is my belief that Shakespeare intended to reveal that rather than being in love Othello felt only desire for Desdemona. Rather than being a typical hero Othello was, rather, revealed as a man caught by lust and passion. He didn't love the character of his wife but rather her body and what she was to him. I found this element of the play unsavoury and found the lack of any true heroes frustrating.

Iago was, however a brilliant villain and like the rest of the characters well devised. He acted like a serpent to bring mischief and cause misery. This I find is the manner of all Shakespeare's best villains. And despite my misgivings about the text the clever construction and wordplay make this a worthwhile Shakespearian play.

Note: And since I now have a 1892 copy of the entire works of Shakespeare I may in the future finally continue where I left off after this volume, progressing through all of Shakespeare's plays that are known.

FOR SHE
HAD EYES
and
CHOSE ME.

William Shakespeare
OTHELLO

Elizabeth:

Othello is a Shakespeare tragedy based on The Moor of Venice. As with all of Shakespeare's work, the plot is thick with romance, sex, deceit, and revenge.



Othello is an African American General in the Venetian Army. He has fallen in love with a beautiful Venetian Lady named Desdemona. The daughter of Brabantio, a senator, Desdemona falls in love with Othello and they marry in secret. Brabantio is not pleased with the marriage as Desdemona as she could have wed the Venetian Nobleman Roderigo who is madly in love with his daughter.



Othello is making many enemies as he has promoted a young soldier Cassio over the great Iago. Iago and Roderigo band together to tell Brabantio of his daughter's whereabouts. Brabantio is furious and races to tell the Duke that Othello has seduced his daughter with evil witch craft. As the gentlemen make their way to the Duke residence, it is discovered that the Turks are going to attack Cyprus therefore Othello is called in to lead the attack. Othello is warned that Desdemona will betray him because she deceived her father by marrying him instead of Roderigo. Desdemona declares her love for Othello and says she wants to go with him wherever he goes.



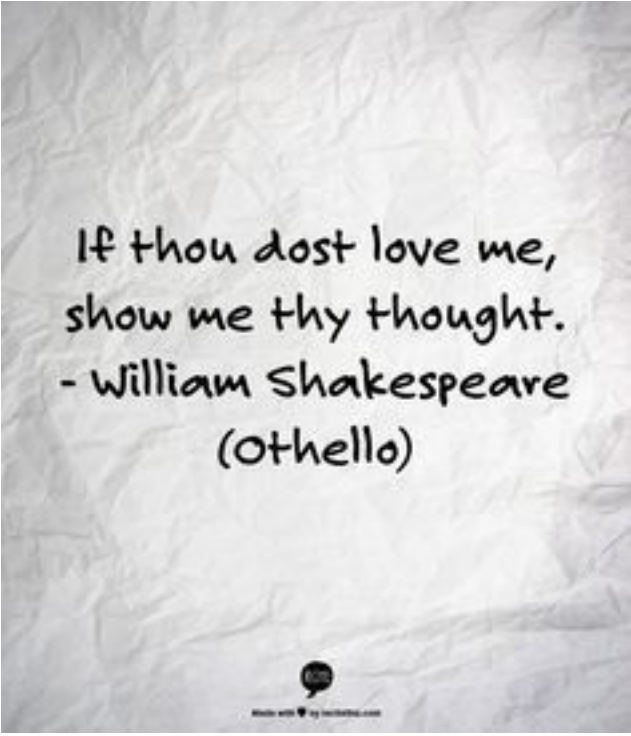
After they arrive in Cyprus, they found that a great storm has defeated the Turkish fleet. Desdemona and Othello go off alone to be together.



While Othello is making love to his wife, Iago schemes to tear Othello apart by planting a wicked web of deceit around him.

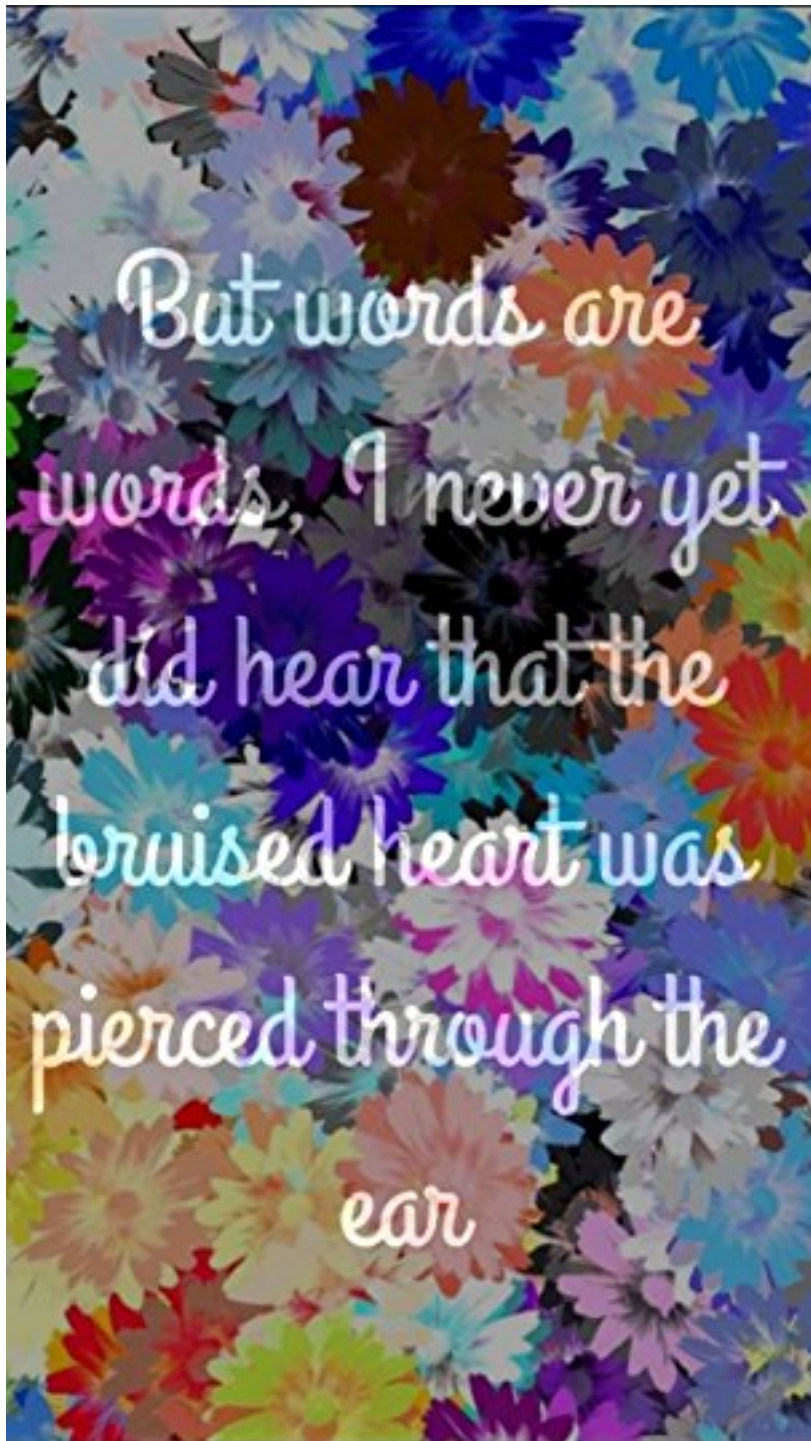


He begins by aiding Cassio into getting drunk. He plots a scheme to lead Othello to believe that his beloved Desdemona is having an affair with another man. Because Iago is such a trustworthy man known for his honesty, Othello believes everything. Meanwhile, Desdemona looks to Iago to help her convince her husband that she is being faithful.



If thou dost love me,
show me thy thought.
- William Shakespeare
(Othello)

The end of this play is of course death! The manner in which breaks your heart. Desdemona loved Othello with all of her heart and to be accused of such treachery and still love him. Even before he kills her, she professes her love for him. The moment Othello finds out the truth, he commits suicide.



Othello is a beautiful story full of passion. I find it most intriguing that the stigma of a biracial couple living in the time period didn't keep them apart. But instead, the jealousy and power hungry drive of a man ripped them apart. Shakespearean text is always a challenge to read and yet once you have mastered the plot the language begins to flow.



Whitney Atkinson: now not as good as hamlet

Zanna: this is often my father's favorite of Shakespeare's plays, and having obvious the hot creation (in modern setting) on the nationwide Theatre the previous day & realizing my dad, i will be able to see why (I learn the play many years ago).It is the tale of a mendacity villain, Iago, whose motivation is natural malice and hatred of his Black boss, the honoured common Othello. opposed to the latter's nature he's made jealous of his younger White lieutenant Cassio.Apart from that of the raving racist Brabantio, the unfairness opposed to Othello is as refined and insidious as racism is today. His second-in-command feels he must have the general's position and makes use of White supremacy to undermine him out of spite.Patriarchy

is one other factor within the play; Desdemona is handed as a chattel from father to husband, each one feeling susceptible to get rid of her at his will. within the dialog she has with Iago's spouse Emilia, the latter expresses fairly a powerful feminist idea "... permit husbands know Their better halves have feel like them: they see and smell And have their palates either for candy and sour, As husbands have. what's it that they do When they alter us for others? Is it sport? I imagine it is: and doth affection breed it? I imagine it doth: is't frailty that hence errs? It is so too: and feature no longer we affections, Desires for sport, and frailty, as males have? Then allow them to use us well: else allow them to know, The ills we do, their ills train us so." So, not just is Othello a good dependent play, with an enticing cast, strong speeches and immortal lines; it is also probably the most stingingly 'relevant' of Shakespeare's works.

Ayne Ray: fingers down the worst pillow struggle in history.

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