

Student Model

Literature Analysis

The world is over populated, but not by ordinary people. Instead, the world is infested with worthless liars. This closely relates to the characters in Shakespeare's tragedies, such as Iago from the drama, *Othello*. The play *Othello*, set in Venice, involves two lovers, Othello and Desdemona, who get married in secrecy. This marriage then leads these two to the town of Cyprus along with Cassio and Iago. The conflict starts when Othello promotes the inexperienced soldier, Cassio, to lieutenant instead of Iago. In turn, Iago takes revenge on Othello and Cassio for their wrongdoing, but he [Iago] does not approach the problem in a normal way; instead, he uses his reputation as "Honest Iago" to his advantage. The name misleads all the characters into a conflict by the simple act of deception done by this one villainous man to obtain power. Therefore, in Shakespeare's tragedy *Othello*, Iago is responsible for the conflict due to his manipulative nature and envy towards Othello and Cassio.

Iago's need for power leads him to use his influence on characters to get what he "thinks" he rightly deserves. By doing so, he creates a domino effect, which causes the conflict. One way Iago manipulates Cassio is through his persuasive ways, by giving a harmless suggestion of drinking. "O, they are our friends. But one cup! I'll drink for you" (2.3.34-35). At this point Cassio is drunk, Iago successfully gets Cassio discharged, leads to the conflict between Othello and Desdemona. The outcome of the argument allows Iago to control who ever he wants. As a result, Iago is free to do as he pleases because everyone falls for his trickery, and hence, inventing the problem. But Iago's

manipulative nature does not stop there. To take it one step further, Iago suggests to Othello that Desdemona is cheating and clearly states “With her, on her; what you will” (4.1.34). Because Iago possesses trust from Othello, he [Iago] can guarantee that Othello will automatically believe him. Thus, Iago is able to use his skill to influence Othello, to become his [Iago] personal puppet. This action further adds to the conflict between Othello and Desdemona, and causes even more tension. Obviously the root of the revenge starts with Iago’s manipulative nature, without it the conflict would cease to exist.

In addition to Iago’s manipulative nature, the conflict becomes unstoppable with Iago’s second trait, which is his envy towards Cassio and Othello. Iago’s grudge sets the conflict to its highest potential. Iago shows his rage towards Cassio for taking what belongs to him [Iago]. The resentment starts to grow when Cassio receives the position of lieutenant. “One Michael Cassio, a Florentine/ That never set a squadron in the field, / Nor the division of battle knows/ More than spinsters; unless the bookish theoretic” (1.1.20-23). Iago’s assertion here blatantly connects his hatred for Cassio to the conflict. Iago’s envy allows him to go forth with his plan to get revenge, thus, creating the problem. Iago’s spite for Othello also encourages him to say, “And Cassio following him with determined sword/ To execute upon him. Sir, this gentleman/Steps in to Cassio and entreats his pause” (2.3.218-220). Here Iago’s envy controls him to tell a pretend story. The fable Iago tells Othello gets Cassio fired. Furthermore, the conflict gets pushed even more by Iago’s actions to show spite for Cassio and Othello. The green-eyed monster can control people to do crazy things, but in this case it powers Iago to cause the conflict.

In conclusion, a liar is a liar, and “Honest Iago” is no different. Iago plans his evil schemes in such a way that his trickery goes unnoticed, and gives Iago the opportunity to cause the conflict undetected. But the bigger influence that affected Iago the most would be, his grudge against Cassio and Othello. Iago’s resentment for Cassio and Othello is so powerful it takes over completely, and fuels him [Iago] to cause the problem. The harmful combination of the desire to obtain what is rightfully not his or her and having the mentality to use someone with no regrets, can drive people even today to do things rational people would not do. Iago has become one of those victims. His stride for power and standing up for what he believes took him straight down the path to the conflict. Hence in the play *Othello*, Iago is the root of the problem.