

Desdemona Character Analysis

Desdemona, a Venetian maiden, is the sole paragon of physical as well as spiritual beauty in Othello. She strikes her character through her qualities of virtue, sympathy, bashfulness and a faithful wife. Just like many other characters, she is not without her shortcomings which account for her, being a victim of Iago's evil intentions and intrigues. Despite her weaknesses her positive qualities provoke us to admire as a guiltless character. Many critics stand for or against her.

Desdemona's Bashfulness and Beauty

Brabantio is rather shocked to see her daughter revolting against his wishes because he deemed her, **"a maiden never bold of spirit. So still and quiet that her motion blush's at herself"** until she saw Othello and all her shyness evaporated. Othello counters Brabantio's statement regarding his daughter that Desdemona is **"fair, feeds well, loves company, is free of speech"**. Desdemona's beauty is aptly sketched by Cassio as thus:

"Most fortunately. He hath achieved a maid

That paragons description and wild fame,

One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,

And in th' essential vesture of creation

Does tire the ingener. "

In simple terms, Cassio wants to assert the fact that Desdemona is so beautiful that her physical grace defies all the stories describing beautiful ladies and she is the masterpiece of God's creation. Manifestly, her shyness and abundant beauty is described by many noticeable characters.

Desdemona's Love for Othello

Her love for Othello is deep, profound and without any ostentation. She admires Othello for his deeds of bravery, done in the battlefield. Othello, while giving his account of his love affair with Desdemona as follow,

"She gave me for my pains a world of sighs.

She swore, in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing

strange,

'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful.

She wished she had not heard it, yet she wished

That heaven had made her such a man."

To simply put, she loved Othello, not because of his black complexity but because of his fierce adventures of seas and lands. When Desdemona is asked to prove her love for Othello before Senate, she juxtaposes her feelings for Othello,

"My heart's subdued

Even to the very quality of my lord.

I saw Othello's visage in his mind,

And to his honors and his valiant parts

Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.

So that, dear lords, if I be left behind

A moth of peace and he go to the war,

The rites for which I love him are bereft me,

And I a heavy interim shall support

By his dear absence. Let me go with him."

She is ready to exceed every limitation out of her love for Othello and she practically does so by not only going with him to Cyprus as to support her gallant husband, but also when she is smothered by Othello's misunderstood cruelty and says when Emilia inquires about the murderer, "**Nobody. I myself. Farewell. Commend me to my kind lord. Oh, farewell!**" just to protect Othello from being hanged.

Desdemona's Innocent and Simple Nature

Desdemona is a pure character who is free from any vile ailment. But she expects from others to be the same as she is which proves fatally wrong. She does not realize that she is being destroyed by the people she trusts the most, including her brave "Moor" who is poisoned by Iago. Another significant trait in Desdemona's character is her simple, trustful and sympathetic nature. That is why she expresses her firm resolution to Cassio when he resorts to her for his restoration of the rank of the lieutenant,

"If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it

To the last article. My lord shall never rest,

Therefore be merry, Cassio,

For thy solicitor shall rather die

Than give thy cause away."

And this is pretty much what happens to her on account of advocating for her suit Cassio to Othello and he thinks it an affair and she loses her life tragically because of her simple, trustful and helpful disposition [this is also a fancy synonym of nature].

Desdemona's Faults

As a character, Desdemona is presented as an ideal character who can hardly be found in the real world of ours. Her first and foremost fault is her dual-channel nature of which she herself alludes, **"I am not merry, but I do beguile. The thing I am by seeming otherwise."** Her father takes her to a shy lady but in reality, she elopes with "an old black ram". Another shortcoming in her character is she is too simple and helping without eyeing into her surroundings when she acts as a 'lawyer' for Cassio and Iago instruments the best use of her intellectual blunder to lead her to tragedy. A critic sharply criticizes Desdemona for her faults as thus,

"She is declared untruthful, she is said to lack intellect and self-respect, she is secretive, she meddles [pokes her nose] in her husband's military affairs. "

Conclusion

Desdemona is a round character, possessing both good and bad qualities but she leaves a noteworthy impression on a reader and he cannot withhold himself from praising Desdemona as a gentle-hearted character.