

Exemplar Turning Point Map
(Theme: Jealousy)

Act 3 Scene 3

- Turning point: Changes Othello from devoted and trusting to insanely jealous
- Iago suggests Desdemona's infidelity
- Begins subtly: "Ha! I like not that. [...] I cannot think it, / That he would steal away so guilty-like, / Seeing you coming."
- Iago's skillful manipulation of this long discussion leads Othello to generate the idea of Desdemona's affair himself.
- At this point Othello's jealousy allows him to be completely controlled by Iago

The sneering tone of Iago's "Ha!" immediately garners interest from Othello. He wonders what Iago has noticed and sees Cassio leaving Desdemona. Iago quickly seizes this opportunity to subtly suggest that this encounter may not have been as innocent as it first appeared. His use of the words "steal" and "guilty-like" imply to Othello that Iago believes something has been happening that should not have been. This smallest suggestion is enough to stir Othello's **jealousy** as he later questions Iago about this encounter.

Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio; / Wear your eyes thus: not jealous nor secure."

This is the crucial suggestion to the success of Iago's plan. Having instructed Cassio to appeal to Desdemona's good nature, he will give Othello countless opportunities to see them together. Desdemona's appeals on behalf of Cassio will also take on new meaning in the **jealous** eyes of Othello.

Having already persuaded Othello of Desdemona's unfaithfulness, Iago obtains the proof that turns Othello's jealousy into murderous rage. He uses the handkerchief, a symbol of their love, to destroy their happiness and leads to the tragic end of the play.

Iago believes that only fools "wear their heart upon their sleeve" and reveal their true self to others.

This is crucial to the turning point as it is his duplicity that earns him the trust of Othello while he simultaneously plots his revenge.

Act 1 Scene 1

- Play begins with Iago admitting that he is a duplicitous character.
- Also reveals motive for seeking revenge on Othello. He is jealous of the fact that Cassio was promoted over him

"I am not what I am."

Act 2 Scene 3

- Iago's plan for revenge takes shape as Cassio is dismissed for a public brawl instigated by Iago.
- As Cassio turns to Iago for advice on how to regain the favour of Othello, Iago seizes his opportunity for revenge.

Act 4 Scene 1

- It is not long after the turning point of the play that Othello's tragic fate is sealed.
- After demanding proof of his wife's affair, Iago is able to show him the handkerchief, obtained in Act 3 Scene 3, in the hands of Cassio.
- Immediately he vows to murder Desdemona, but once again is directed by Iago who now controls him.

Act 5 Scene 1

- As the play comes to its tragic conclusion, the consequences of the turning point are played out for the audience.
- Shakespeare expertly builds the tension in the scene as Othello, overwhelmed by jealousy and controlled by Iago, murders his wife.
- Only after he kills her does he find out that he has been duped by Iago.

"Then must you speak / Of one that loved not wisely, but too well; / Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought, / Perplexed in the extreme."

At last, Othello seems to recognise his flaws that were exposed by Iago through the turning point. He refers to himself loving "not wisely, but too well," clearly referring to the misplaced trust he put in Iago and the lack of faith he put in Cassio and Desdemona.

He also recognises his fatal flaw of jealousy and realises the tragedy it has brought upon him.

The audience now sees the tragedy of the power and control that Iago gained over Othello as the play turned.

Iago is now so confident in his hold over Othello he can even direct him in the manner of Desdemona's murder. Othello's sickening pleasure in response to this command is the thrice repeated "good," which suggests he is enjoying the thoughts of his revenge.

"IAGO - Do it not with poison. Strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated. OTHELLO - Good, good. The justice of it pleases. Very good."

His **jealous** madness is also demonstrated here with his reference to the murder being an act of justice. This idea is laden with dramatic irony as the audience is fully aware that both Desdemona and Cassio are completely innocent. The idea of justice is repeated as the play builds to its climax making the tragedy even more devastating for the audience.

This soliloquy reveals exactly what Iago plans to do at the turning point of the play.

Iago advises Cassio to seek the help of Desdemona but, at the same time, plans to suggest the two are having an affair, stirring Othello's jealousy.

He intends to turn Desdemona's "virtue into pitch," suggesting that her willingness to assist Cassio will be misconstrued by a **jealous** Othello.

This powerful soliloquy ends with an image of trapping all three, Cassio, Desdemona and Othello, in the same net, recalling an earlier image of the spider's web – an unseen threat they are all caught in.

"So will I turn her virtue into pitch, / And out of her own goodness make the net / That shall enmesh them all."