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Act III Study Guide

\* This Study guide is more difficult than the others. As we start to understand more of the story, the plot thickens. This quiz will be more difficult as well. Make sure you understand all parts of this study guide!

1. Why does Cassio bring musicians?
2. How will Desdemona get Othello to restore Cassio's place to him
3. What responses do Iago and Othello have to seeing Cassio leave Desdemona? How successfully does Desdemona plead for Cassio? What is Othello's response to Desdemona as she leaves?
4. When Desdemona leaves, Othello's love is apparently as solid as it can be. Yet soon after Othello is in "misery," and in his next speech he is talking about seeing proof (and therefore is already suspicious). What has happened (and what has Iago done) to move him from love to a choice between "love or jealousy"? And how can anyone provide proof of fidelity?
5. Othello has a two-line speech when he thinks he is alone, so it's almost a soliloquy. What does it tell us about the state of his mind?
6. Read Othello's soliloquy carefully? How likely is it that Othello will keep an open mind until he has seen real proof? How much have Iago's suggestions about Desdemona's "nature" worked on Othello? Is there any chance of his changing his mind or of Desdemona's convincing him of her innocence after this speech? How does seeing her change his ideas?
7. What thing did Emilia find and give to Iago? What did Iago intend to do with it?
8. How does Iago treat his wife? What is Emilia afraid of? What will Iago do with the handkerchief?
9. Why didn't Iago simply tell Othello right away that Desdemona and Cassio were having an affair?
10. By now how much real proof have we or Othello really seen?

a. Yet how convinced has Othello become by all this "proof"?

b. What new level has he reached?

c. Note that Iago warns him not that Desdemona may be faithful but that Othello may change his mind. But how likely is Othello to change his mind?

d. What is ironic about Othello's kneeling to Iago?

e. What is ironic about Iago's response?

f. With this suggestion planted, what "bloody business" does Othello engage Iago in?

g. How does Iago again seem to "back off"? What is Othello's response?

h. What will happen to Desdemona?

i. What has Iago just gained?

1. By the end of 3.3. Othello is ready to kill Desdemona because she has been unfaithful to him with Cassio. Go back over the scene to see how Iago has brought Othello to this point. What has happened to the need for "ocular proof"? How much proof has there been?
2. What was Iago's reply when Othello demanded proof of his wife's disloyalty?
3. What did Othello decide and command at the end of Scene III?
4. What was Emilia's relationship with Iago? Desdemona?
5. Who had the handkerchief at the end of Act III? Why?