

Poetic Devices in Othello

Determine who states the quotation, and which poetic device is represented. The list of available poetic devices is given below. Each one will be used at least one time.

Allusion, Apostrophe, Hubris, Metaphor, Simile

Quotation	Said by & Translation (line by line)	Device & Explanation
<p><b>Act 1, scene 3, line 343-392</b>                      Moors are changeable in their wills -- fill thy purse with money. The food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as acerbic as the colicoquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice.</p>	<p>Said by: <b>Iago</b>                      Moors tend to change their minds a lot -- fill your wallet with money. The food that he finds as delicious as locusts, will soon be as bitter as the bitter apple. She's young and she'll change her mind: when she is satisfied with physical desires, she will see her mistake.</p>	<p><b>Simile:</b> Iago compares Othello's feelings for Desdemona to food. The food is delicious at first, but then becomes bitter. So too is the progression of Othello's relationship with Desdemona, at least according to Iago. Othello delights in Desdemona first, but will soon become tired of her.</p>
<p><b>Act 3, scene 3, line 380-387</b>                      By the world,                      I think my wife be honest and think she is not;                      I think that thou art just and think thou art not.                      I'll have some proof. Her name that was as fresh                      As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black                      As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,                      Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,                      I'll not endure it. Would I were satisfied!</p>	<p>Said by: <b>Othello</b>                      By the world,                      I think that my wife is honest, but also think that she isn't;                      I think you're fair and at the same time I think you aren't.                      I want some proof. Her name that was as pure                      As the virgin goddess' face, is now blackened and soiled                      Just like the color of my own face. If there are cords, or knives,                      Poison, or fire, or streams where one drowns,                      I won't stand for it. I want this uneasiness to leave me!</p>	<p><b>Allusion:</b> Othello alludes to Diana, the goddess of chastity.  <b>Simile:</b> Othello compares Desdemona's reputation to the purity of Diana.  <b>Metaphor:</b> Othello further compares Desdemona's reputation to the blackness of his skin. It's not that Desdemona is actually ruining her reputation, but Othello thinks she is staining it.</p>
<p><b>Act 4, scene 1, line 44-48</b>                      Work on,                      My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught;                      And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,                      All guiltless, meet reproach. What, ho! my lord!                      My lord, I say! Othello!</p>	<p>Said by: <b>Iago</b>                      Keep working,                      My medicine, keep working! In this way gullible fools are captured;                      And even noble and modest ladies ,                      Who are guiltless, end up being scolded. Well, hello! my lord!                      My lord, I say! Othello.</p>	<p><b>Apostrophe:</b> Iago is talking to the metaphorical poison he is using to trick the other characters. Since he is not actually talking to a vial of medicine, it is an apostrophe.  <b>Metaphor:</b> The medicine Iago is talking about is also a metaphor. Iago's plot is like a poison. It alters behavior, making it negative, just like a poison. Iago's actions are like a potent potion, because they, like a potent potion, work on everybody, whether gullible or noble.</p>

Quotation	Said by & Translation (line by line)	Device & Explanation
<p><b>Act 3, scene 3, line 264-272</b></p> <p>She's gone. I am abused; and my relief Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage, That we can call these delicate creatures ours, And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad And live upon the vapour of a dungeon, Than keep a corner in the thing I love For others' uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones; Prerogated are they less than the base; 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death:</p>	<p><b>Said by: Othello</b></p> <p>She's gone. I am hurt; and my comfort Must come from hating her. O what a curse marriage is, That we can call these delicate creatures ours, But not their physical desires! I would rather be a toad And live off of the foul air of a dungeon, Than have a part of the thing I love Be used for the pleasures of others. But, that's the curse of being great; They are tested more than lowly people; It's a destiny that cannot be avoided, like death:</p>	<p><b>Hubris:</b> Othello is showing hubris by stating that he is great, because such troubles only fall on the shoulders of the great.</p> <p><b>Imagery:</b> Othello states that he would rather be a toad living in a dungeon, than being cheated on by Desdemona. This comparison emphasizes how hurt Othello is, and how much turmoil he is experiencing, since being a toad in a dungeon would be better than his current situation.</p>
<p><b>Act 1, scene 2, line 62 - 71</b></p> <p>O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter? Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her; For I'll refer me to all things of sense, If she in chains of magic were not bound, Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy, So opposite to marriage that she shunned The wealthy curled darlings of our nation, Would ever have, -- t' incur a general mock -- Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom Of such a thing as thou, to fear, not to delight.</p>	<p><b>Said by: Brabantio</b></p> <p>Oh you rotten thief, where have you hidden my daughter? Damned as you are, you have cast a spell on her; If I think about it logically, If she wasn't all caught up in your chains of magic, Would a maiden so soft, pretty and happy, So opposed to getting married that she rejected The richest and most handsome picks in the country, Would she ever have -- to be made fun of -- Run from her parents to the dark breast Of something like you, something more to be afraid of than to be happy with.</p>	<p><b>Metaphor:</b> Brabantio thinks Othello has put a love spell on Desdemona. He is comparing this spell to chains. Just like a kidnapper ties up a victim, and then takes that victim, so too does Othello seemingly ensnare Desdemona before he runs off with her. Othello's spell is like a chain because it is strong, and Othello uses it to take Desdemona away.</p>
<p><b>Act 5, scene 2, line 16 - 22</b></p> <p>Ah balmy breath, that dost almost persuade Justice to break her sword! One more, one more. Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee, And love thee after. One more, and this the last: So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep, But they are cruel tears: this sorrow's heavenly; It strikes where it doth love. She wakes.</p>	<p><b>Said by: Othello</b></p> <p>Oh warm breath, that almost convinces My sense of right and wrong to put down this sword! One more, one more. If you're like this when you are dead, I'm going to kill you, And love you after. One more, and this is the last one: Something so sweet was never so fatal. I must weep, But they are cruel tears: this sorrow is like the sorrow from heaven, That has to hurt that which it loves. She's waking up.</p>	<p><b>Paradox:</b> The term "sorrow's heavenly" has two contrasting ideas. Sorrow is something sad, and heavenly is something wonderful and delightful. Othello may be saying that the sorrow he feels is from heaven, because it is the type of sorrow he feels for serving cruel justice to that which he loves.</p>