

Playwright: *****

Play: *Grace and Gall*

Draft: 2022.08.23

Reader: Michael Tricca

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WHAT WAS STRIKING/COMPELLING/EXCITING, ETC.?

- Recontextualization of this classic text could have a lot to offer to discourse about trust, jealousy, and abuse, and we see some really compelling sparks of that here.
 - “Which people *are* supposed to do things like this?” had a strong impact. “Generals aren’t supposed to” —where do we see domestic violence coming from? What preconceptions do we hold about who commits it and who suffers from it?
- “He’s the kind of person that needs love more than anyone.” Devastating. What potentially makes this particularly true? What potentially makes this just a form of coping?
- Their reactions to hearing the men outside were *very* illustrative, say a *lot* with just a bit of action.
- “He won’t” O O O F

QUESTIONS FROM THE READ

- What does Mona need from Emily? What can Mona **get** from Emily, in this situation?
- Ditto with Emily—where she doesn’t go through as much apparent change, I’m left wanting to know what she gets out of her relationship with Mona.
 - Mona gets a “bad influence” out of her—vice versa?
- **Inciting incident**
 - Could be “He... insisted you all stay.” How does this inform the conflict? Does Emily then feel she needs to leave?
 - **Stasis** = Mona looking after Emily post-party →
 - **Intrusion** = Mona isn’t looking out for Emily—she’s making a demand/begging thru her husband (free will is disrupted/inhibited) Circles back around in climax w/ “No one owns us”
 - Could be “He said we shouldn’t be friends anymore.” This is mirrored later in “Might as well actually have some”
 - **Stasis** = army wives navigating how to survive husbands’ abuse/suspicion together →
 - **Intrusion** = exterior force of husband threatens their bond
- In both of these cases, the apparent **climax** occurs around the same place, end of pg. 9
- How can the inciting incident be sharper, and its knot w/ the climax be tightened? There’s an exploration of trust, agency—can climax hit more sharply on both of them, together? Or is one particularly more pressing for the playwright to explore as the primary thread?

- Imminent arrival of husbands an excellent stimulus for urgency, w/ a great manifestation towards the end—how can this be **felt** more? What are the stakes if Othello starts spying on Mona?
- “He won’t”
 - How can this be felt more? What **fatal flaw** does it indicate in Mona—and what does it mean for her, Emily, and the audience that she still possesses it in the end?
 - If she didn’t still have it, then the end of *Othello* would be different—how can this moment, then, support a dialogue between this piece and the original?
- “He’s the kind of person that needs love more than anyone.” I’m just left wanting to know more about this. Mona justifies Othello’s hitting her when Emily interrogates her, but she doesn’t actually answer **this** specific question, which makes Mona having said it all the more fascinating.
 - Is it something to do with race/ethnicity/intersectionality? This [straight-ish cis white man] isn’t certain—the specifics of the in-class discussion on this escape me. Not sure whether this piece steps around that topic, or whether the original reflected it so strongly in the first place in the way we of the modern day understand it

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

The concept alone of a private conversation between these characters is very exciting, and seeing it contextualized in a modern adaptation really sparks the imagination! You introduce so many compelling threads here—agency, trust, power, love, abuse, friendship—and each of them feels as if it has equal potential energy in its exploration.

I get the sense that picking some threads to snip (for a ten-minute) and choosing some to pull taut will reveal some very strong patterns. There’s so much to be explored in this play, and the way the characters have so much on their minds they need to share with each other demonstrates a wealth of knowledge about the original text and the avenues it presents to explore.

As an audience member, I’m torn—on one hand, this is Emily and Mona’s story, and on the other hand, I want to know more of their thoughts on Othello’s situation so as to get a better sense of how Mona’s concern for Othello is cornering her more.

Knowing the fate of both of these characters had an interesting effect on my readings of it. On one hand, it was devastating to know that these women would be dead at the hands of the husbands they talk about by the end of the parent piece. In the moment, though, the gravity of that ultimate fate made me wonder what the stakes for this slice of their stories could possibly be. How can the tension be raised for this immediate ten-minute moment? How, additionally/alternatively, can the stakes of the original piece create a greater sense of pressure here? I want to know what the primary threat for these ten minutes is, and what these characters can get from each other to resolve it.

I’m excited to see more of this piece as it develops!