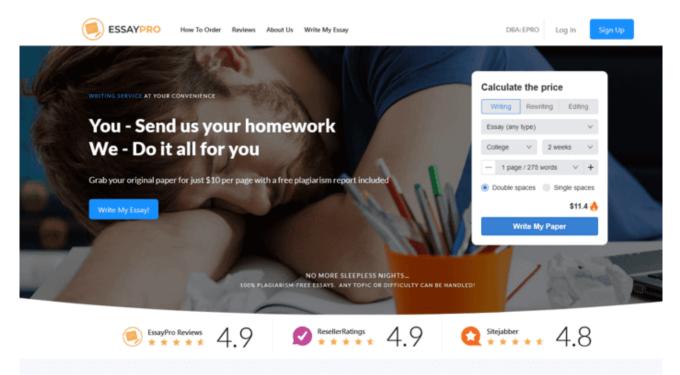
Pretending by Queen Elizabeth and Othello's lago



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In today's society, nothing is really what it seems. Those great "free-bees" you win are never really free and no deal is really as good as it sounds. Even people don't seem to be stable anymore because they are always changing to fit the current trend or to blend in with the newest "crowd". They live their lives covered with a mask and they forget or don't want to be what is most important, themselves, and this is what is called pretending. The idea of "pretending" is when someone "seems" or acts to be something they are not. Although we see this happening a lot today, the act of pretending goes back much further. The act of "pretending" has been used in a lot of early British literature, and it is here that we can see that it can be used for both good and evil purposes. A good example of each of these is found in Elizabeth's life and writings, and Shakespeare's play, Othello, in the character of lago.

Although it is not that common, the act of pretending can be used in a good way. This is seen in <u>Queen</u> Elizabeth. Elizabeth Tudor came to the <u>throne</u> of England in 1558. During this time, there was a great amount of religious upheaval because England was going through periods of Catholic and Protestant rule. Elizabeth, being a woman on the throne,

had to demonstrate to her people that she was fit to rule the country and would do everything for their best interest. In order to do this, Elizabeth had to seem to be something she was not. The Longman <u>Anthology</u> of British Literature states, "throughout her long reign she cultivated two personas . . . As a monarch, she could speak courageously...; as a woman, she could convey understanding..." (475). In this respect, Elizabeth had to be strong and use her "pretending" for the good of the people, while not showing too much emotion.

During her time as queen, Elizabeth addressed parliament both on the subjects of marriage and on her loyalty to her country. Perhaps she did this because she was questioned about leaving an heir to the throne. To answer this Elizabeth wrote,

And albeit it might please Almighty God to continue me still in this mind to live out of the state of marriage.

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