

South Tahoe High School
Grade 10
Second Place

Marian Anderson's quote conveys the message that if one is so concerned with putting others down you can't live your own life fully. I disagree with this statement because there are plenty of people who are rude and cruel and they end up right where they want to be. All the bullies out there know the damage they are doing and the risk they take by doing it, so in turn they put themselves where they want to end up and sometimes it beneficial.

Take for example the fictional character Snape from J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, it was a requirement for his duty to Voldemort to be incredibly displeased to Harry Potter. By being so gruesome he actually got ahead in life and gained the trust of his master.

Another character who had a sour temperament is Poseidon from Homer's *The Odyssey*. Poseidon made it his goal to ruin the life of Odysseus, and he wasn't exactly well liked by the other gods at Mt. Olympus either; because he treated them like his subordinates. Even if his evil plans didn't always work out Poseidon was no further behind in life he still had much fame and power.

Even in the real world we have a saying "nice guys finish last". Society is set up so you have to be mean, aggressive, and cut-throat in order to succeed. Look at corporate CEOs they didn't get to that position by being friendly and helpful to everyone they met, it was a competition that they had to beat other people out of to win. Or look at any sport in the history of the world; the whole point is to put others down by making them lose. In the end it pays off to keep people down. Anderson's quote might be more realistic if it read, "As long as you keep a person down, you might as well use them as a stepping stool, to reach your highest potential."