Name

Instructor’s Name

Class Information

Date

HAMLET

Shakespeare's play "Hamlet" is among the finest renowned pieces of writing in the English language. It portrays the story of Prince Hamlet and his struggles to come to terms with his father's death. In this paper, I will be analyzing Act 1 and Act 2 of the play, focusing on Gertrude traits as a woman, Queen, mother, and widow and the relationship between Claudius and Gertrude.

**ACT I***(what kind of woman, Queen, mother, and widow is Gertrude?)*

In Act 1 of Shakespeare's play "Hamlet," Gertrude is portrayed as a complex and multi-faceted character. She is presented as the monarch of Denmark, the wife of King Hamlet, and the mother of Prince2 Hamlet.

As a woman, Gertrude is shown to be a traditional, obedient wife who follows the lead of her new husband, King Claudius. She seems to have little agency of her own and is largely a passive figure in the court. In Act 1, Scene 2, she is seen conversing with Hamlet and other courtiers, but her role is limited to agreeing with Claudius and not contributing much to the conversation. For example, she pleads, "Sweet Hamlet put off thy knighted color and let thy eyes seem like a comrade on Denmark" (Shakespeare 1.2.67-68), here she is trying to comfort Hamlet and urging him to put on a brave face, but she doesn't seem to understand the depth of his distress.

As a Queen, Gertrude is presented as a figure of authority and power, but her power is limited. Despite not being actively engaged in the political concerns of the kingdom, she is revered and given attention by the other courtiers. Her role is limited to being a figurehead and not making any significant decisions. For instance, in lines 97-98, she says "The Queen shall speak with you", this line shows her authority and respect in the court but it's also clear that she's not the one who makes decisions (Shakespeare 1.2.97-98).

As a widow, Gertrude is shown to be in a state of grief and mourning for her late husband, King Hamlet, but this mourning period is short-lived as she quickly remarries to Claudius, her late husband's brother (Shakespeare 1.2.37-39). This action suggests that Gertrude is not only inconsiderate but also lacks loyalty to her late husband.

Lastly, as a mother, Gertrude is shown to care for her son, Hamlet, but her actions suggest that she is not a very attentive mother. She fails to recognize the depth of Hamlet's anguish over his father's passing and her subsequent remarriage. For example, she remarks "You know that it is inevitable; all that breathes will die," (Shakespeare 1.2.63-64).

**ACT II** *(The relationship between Claudius and Gertrude)*

In Act II of Shakespeare's play "Hamlet," the relationship between Claudius and Gertrude is characterized as a complex and tumultuous one.

On one hand, Claudius is shown to be deeply in love with Gertrude and is concerned for her well-being. In Scene 2, he says “But, kind brother, don't act like some impolite preachers who say, "Show me the rocky and prickly route to heaven, Whiles, like a bloated and irresponsible deviant, Himself the beautiful road of dalliance treads," (Shakespeare 2.2.91-93). Claudius is trying to convince his brother that his marriage to Gertrude is not a sin, and that he loves her deeply. He also expresses his concern for her well-being and tries to comfort her.

On the other hand, Gertrude is shown to be somewhat distant and detached from Claudius. In Scene 2, she says " I do not believe there is any other cause other than: His father's passing and our hurried union," (Shakespeare2 2.2.114-117). Gertrude acknowledges that Hamlet is upset with her marriage to Claudius and implies that she is aware of the reasons behind his distress.

Additionally, the relationship between Gertrude and Claudius is marked by a dearth of openness and sincerity. Claudius is seen to be hiding the truth about King Hamlet's death from Gertrude, and she is not aware of Claudius's role in it. Also, in Scene 2, Claudius says "But, to speak to the point, not yet to know, whether, indeed, this spirit be a devil, let me not think on’t; for it is too fearful"(Shakespeare 2.2.131-12). Claudius is reluctant to reveal to Gertrude that he killed King Hamlet.

Works Cited

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. 3rd ed., Gallimard Education, 2008.