

King arthur and his
knights by thomas
malory and the
tempest by william
shakespeare...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Betrayal can work in many ways, and subsequently, can have a prominent impact on a person. One may react to it in different ways depending on the severity of the treachery. King Arthur and His Knights by Thomas Malory and The Tempest by William Shakespeare revolve around personal development of characters and the way betrayal affected their personality.

In both texts, deceit resulted in two main forms, in vengeance and in forgiveness. This can be illustrated by closely examining the situations wherein the characters have been betrayed and by analyzing their reaction. Betrayal can impact a person so negatively that they turn to vengeance as a final solution. In King Arthur and His Knights, Sir Lancelot betrayed the trust of King Arthur by having a secret affair with his wife, Queen Guinevere. As a result King Arthur chooses revenge against Sir Lancelot to deal with his betrayal.

King Arthur says, "... I shall never have rest of him till I have destroyed Sir Lancelot's kin and himself both, other else he is to destroy me," (173). King Arthur is devastated by Sir Lancelot's act of infidelity that he starts a war to retrieve his wife Queen Guinevere from Sir Lancelot's hold.

In addition, King Arthur wants to destroy Lancelot's ' kin' as well as ' himself'. His anger and hatred of Sir Lancelot causes him to be a murderer by wanting to slaughter Lancelot's family anyone that he is close to. King Arthur not only wants to kill Sir Lancelot physically, but he wants Lancelot to die emotionally. He wants Lancelot to feel the pain that he felt and to suffer as he suffered. Lancelot's betrayal results in King Arthur wanting vengeance,

and he is willing to get retaliation whether he lives or dies. Another example of betrayal that led to vengeance is the ' Vengeance of Sir Gawain'.

Sir Lancelot in his battle to save Queen Guinevere, accidentally slayed the brother of Sir Gawain, Sir Gareth. Sir Gawain is angered by the deception that was shown by Sir Lancelot that he wishes to avenge Sir Gareth, by murdering Sir Lancelot. He says, “..

. Now I shall make you a promise unto God for the death of my brother, Sir Gareth, I shall seek Sir Lancelot throughout seven kings realms, but I shall slay him other he shall slay me. “(175). Sir Gawain held Sir Lancelot above all other knights of the round table, he looked to him as an idol. However when Gawain found out the Lancelot had killed Gareth, he was enraged and immediately reverted to hatred and vengeance. He tells King Arthur that he will make a promise to God to slay Sir Lancelot for the death of his brother.

His determination and love for his brother is what keeps his vengeance fierce and strong. In this situation betrayal almost instantaneously resulted in vengeance, showing just how selfish and inconsiderate human beings are.

Similarly in *The Tempest*, the act of betrayal can result in vengeance, shown strongly when Prospero is discussing his relationship with his brother with Miranda. He says, “ A falsehood in its contrary as great/ As my trust was- which had indeed no limit,/A confidence sans bound, He being thus lorded/ Not only with my revenue yielded/ But my power might else exact”. (Iii I - 44-49) This quotation introduces how Prospero was betrayed by his brother, Antonio and how he felt like he had completely lost all trust in him. When

Prospero is discussing with Ariel why he caused the storm he says, " A most auspicious star, whose influence/ If now I court not, but omit my fortunes.

" (Iii I - 180-182) Prospero believes that good fortunes are within his reach and justice will be served against his enemies. He wants to bring Antonio to the island and punish him for the usurpation of his Kingdom of Milan.

Because Prospero was provoked by his brother's betrayal it led him to anger and hatred and he believes that vengeance will even out his relationship with Antonio. Prospero had the chance to finally be able to retaliate with his brother and without a doubt he took it. Another example of betrayal is when Caliban discusses how he thinks that Prospero took away his rightful island. " As I told thee before, I am subject to a tyrant, a sorcerer/ that by his cunning hath cheated me of the island.

.. If thy greatness will revenge it on him. " (Iiii I - 39-40 and I 50) Caliban has a very twisted sense of reality, he thinks because he was born on the island and that it was his mother's island, it by default belongs to him.

However, when Prospero deemed Caliban the prisoner of the island he felt that the ownership of the island was being usurped. Caliban who has always been angry at Prospero asks Stephano for help in carrying out his revenge. He wants to kill Prospero for betraying him and therefore desires to take back his rightful island. Though Prospero had a moral reason for captivating Caliban, he still feels like he has been betrayed and his feelings towards Prospero cause him to want vengeance. In both texts there have been characters that have experienced betrayal and therefore the act causes vengeance.

This can happen in a close relationship as well as in a relationship that has already been damaged. King Arthur and Prospero have both lost trust in a person they had a close bond with and it caused them to experience hatred and anger which eventually led to vengeance. King Arthur loved Sir Lancelot very much, and their relationship seemed as if it could not be broken by anything. However when he found out that Lancelot was having an affair with his wife, he felt that their relationship had been a lie.

He had chosen a very negative path because he wanted nothing more than to kill Lancelot and carry out his revenge. Likewise, Prospero who was exiled by his brother, Antonio, felt incredibly cheated of their relationship and he too chose a path where Antonio could be punished for all his wrong doings. Sir Gawain and Caliban, two very important but somewhat looked at as minor characters, have also felt betrayal; however, in this case the relationship was close to damage or already damaged. Both these acts of betrayal were done by characters who did not think properly about their actions.

Lancelot was attempting to save Queen Guinevere's life and in the heat of the battle he accidentally slayed Sir Gareth. Sir Gawain was infuriated when he found out, and thought Lancelot had purposely killed his brother and he felt Lancelot had betrayed his trust as well as his passed brother's. In the same ways Prospero did not think he was taking away Caliban's island but rather benefiting Caliban of his stay. Caliban did not feel the same way, and if only Prospero carefully considered his actions, Caliban would have never wanted to act upon his betrayal and try to rape Miranda and kill Prospero.

Betrayal, however severe, can result in a person making ruthless decisions based upon anger and hatred and it can cause unforeseeable consequences such as vengeance, which could damage a person's life endlessly.

Forgiveness is an important virtue within a person and it is tested when one has been betrayed. Dame Elaine, who was in love with Sir Lancelot, tricked him to think that she was Queen Guinevere. After Sir Lancelot and Elaine spent the night together, he is enraged to find out the morning after that it was not his beloved Guinevere but a strange girl he had never met. Their conversation goes as follows: " Ah, false traitress! Why has thou betrayed me? Tell me, anon," said Sir Lancelot, " What thou art. " " Sir," she said, " I am Elaine, the daughter of King Pelles.

" " Well," said Sir Lancelot, " I will forgive you. "(75) Sir Lancelot chooses to be merciful and forgive Dame Elaine for her betrayal rather than to be angry at her. Though his love for Queen Guinevere is great, and he is an honourable man who must uphold his status, he knows he must not hold resentment against Elaine as it would do not benefit their relationship. Sir Lancelot is able to exemplify that betrayal does not always need a negative response and mercifulness is the most effective path to take. As mentioned, Sir Gawain wanted to avenge the death of his brother by killing Sir Lancelot. The two fought countless of times and it eventually led to the death of Sir Gawain. Before he died, he wrote Sir Lancelot a letter expressing his feelings towards him. He write, "..

. I Sir Gawain, knight of the Table Round, sought my death and not through thy deserving, but mine own seeking. Wherefore I beseech thee, Sir Lancelot

to return again onto this realm, and see my tomb and pray some prayer more other less for my soul...

for a more noblerman might not be slain. (205) Sir Gawain sought for Sir Lancelot throughout the final days of his life, and he confesses that it was not Sir Lancelot's fault for his death, but his own for choosing to avenge Sir Gareth's death. His last wish was for Sir Lancelot to visit his ' tomb and pray some prayer' for his soul. He hoped for peace in between him and for the slaying of his brother. Sir Gawain knew that such a noble man could never be slain as Lancelot's only duty was to protect and save Queen Guinevere.

A forgiving heart after so much hatred and vengeance is truly great and Sir Gawain perfectly illustrates how ultimate amount of anger for a person can lead to forgiveness. The Tempest also shows many situations where a character that has been betrayed choses to have a forgiving heart. Prospero who has been deceived a number of times by Caliban, most shockingly when Caliban planned to kill him, decides to have mercy on the creature. For he's a bastard one- had plotted with them/ to take my life"...

" Go, sirrah, to my cell/ Take with you your companions. As you look/ to have my pardon, trim it handsomely. " (Vi I - 273-274 and I -290-293) Prospero has already realized that forgiveness rather than vengeance is the greater virtue, and he was not going to make the same error in choosing to be angry and rancorous at Caliban when he could simply choose to forgive him.

Prospero tells Caliban to go clean his cell if Caliban would like his forgiveness, which is often the approach parents' use with their children to tell them that they have been forgiven. This manner of forgiveness shows

that Prospero treats Caliban as one of his own children and he accepts responsibility for him, even though Caliban had betrayed him. Prospero has also been significantly betrayed by his brother Antonio, however despite that, Prospero learns that it is not always right to keep hatred for a person and decide on forgiving him.

He says, " For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother/ would even infect my mouth, I do forgive/ Thy rankest fault- all of them. "(Vi I - 130-131) The relationship between Prospero and Antonio is so damaged that Prospero cannot even call him brother anymore. However, Prospero still forgives him; he forgives all of Antonio faults because he knows that their relationship cannot move on if Prospero still has a vendetta against Antonio. Prospero being betrayed led him to realize the faults that he, himself has and forgiveness was the only way to escape the constant anger he was in. Both texts clearly show that the act of betrayal results greatly in forgiveness then it does in anything else.

Sir Gawain and Prospero both realize the mistakes of their ways, and have learned that in choosing vengeance one will not always find the joys one has wished for, rather one finds more misery and loneliness. In Sir Gawain choosing to avenge his brother's death, it led him to his own death and he was able to recognize that fact and ask for peace before his passing. Gawain and Prospero no longer wanted to live a life of hate and decided upon ' forgiving and forgetting'. Betrayal in even the simplest form is portrayed in these two texts, such as when Elaine pretends to be Queen Guinevere and Caliban unsuccessfully attempts to murder Prospero. Even though these two

types of betrayal are not the most severe it still shows that forgiving and a kind hearted soul can change the way a person's life is carried out.

For instance, if Sir Lancelot did not forgive Elaine and killed her, as if was going to do, it would have a great impact on the lives of Sir Lancelot and the family of Elaine. Caliban, who now has been forgiven, will try to make a better life out of himself and Prospero will no longer have him as a burden. Betrayal leads to forgiveness because vengeance, anger and hatred is short lived and people tend to realize that to move in a relationship is better than to stay in one stationary, miserable position. As human beings we are not impeccable, we are selfish, inconsiderate, ill-mannered and occasionally tend to betray the ones we love most. Betraying a person and being betrayed is natural part of life, however the way one reacts to these situations differs.

In both King Arthur and His Knights and The Tempest the two central characters, King Arthur and Prospero, have had their share of treachery throughout text and the two reacted similarly to being betrayed. They reacted with first anger, hatred and vengeance however, they both learned the errors of their ways and their betrayal resulted in mercifulness, kindness and forgiveness. The ways in which King Arthur and Prospero reacted to betrayal are the ways that many people react to betrayal or in turn life itself. How one reacts to deceit accurately portrays the true character that exists.

Once one has seen the true image of themselves, they can both move on and carry forth life as if nothing had happen, they can completely change their image or they can learn from the experience and transform for the better. Betrayal, however unfortunate it turns out to be, is a necessary part

of our lives because it both strengths our defences and then allows us to lower them to accept and appreciate the real meanings of life.