

# What happens in hamlet: macmillan

Literature



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HAMLET Literature in its shortest definition is the reflection of life. As life is never a complete joy or a complete sadness It is the mix of thesetwo, in the same way a good piece of literature carries these emotions in such a way that they cannot be separated. Therefore when the audience comes across such situation, they go through simultaneous experience of pleasure and disquietude at the same.

The revenge tragedy Hamlet by William Shakespeare is also one of such plays. There are certain elements, issues, developments, and outcomes that both evoke pleasure and disquietude. First of all it is the Hamlet's relation with Ophelia that is quite pleasurable and pathetic at the same time. It is pleasurable when the beautiful Ophelia appears in act II scene I as, " The fair Ophelia - Nymph in thy orisons" The entire play is full of such lines showing her beauty and innocence. However, Hamlet's later attitude towards her mixed with the death of her father and her own tragic end creates dissatisfaction among the audience.

Secondly Hamlet's tragic end creates unrest in the minds of the audience, because the character of Hamlet has universal appeal and significance. His figure, as Brandes puts it, " is one of the very few immortal figures of art and poetry. Like Cervantes' Don Quixote, and Goethe's Faust." Such a figure did not deserve such a fate. His witty remarks and his discussions with Ophelia and Polonius create pleasure in the play. No doubt some critics are never reluctant to blame Hamlet's irresoluteness as the cause of his tragic death, but they ignore the fact, that Hamlet was not a layman to act impulsively. He was a thinker and fine soldier. Ophelia, in a soliloquy deplores the fact that Hamlet, a combination of the courtier, the scholar, and the soldier how could <https://assignbuster.com/what-happens-in-hamlet-macmillan/>

he loss his reason.

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!

The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword(Act III Scene I Lines 151-152)

Thirdly the death of the queen is also a blend of pleasure and disquietude. She played a role in the murder of his husband, therefore she deserved a penalty, but she received at a time, when she realized her crime and became repentant

Fourthly, the overall impact and action of the play is perfect blending of pleasure and disquietude. We take a sigh of relief at the death of the king, because he is a merciless murderer and deserves death. We also feel relief, up to some extent, at the death of the queen because we feel " justice has been done", but at the same time the premature death of Ophelia, the death of Leartes and the death of Hamlet create unrest. Especially in the case of Ophelia and Leartes the audience has no idea, why should these two innocent characters suffer such a tragic death.

The basic reason for such an effect of pleasure and disquietude in many plays of William Shakespeare, particularly in Hamlet, Macbeth, and King Lear is because of the fact that his bad characters are never completely devil incarnates and his good characters are also never innocent like angles. All of these characters are life like and appeal to the reason, and it is blending of evilness and goodness in them which creates this effect of pleasure and disquietude.

Reference

J. Dover Wilson. What Happens in Hamlet: Macmillan. 1935.

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