

Hamlet and claudius

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Relationships are very important today and they were very important in the past. Each relationship is different, some are good and some are bad. Good relationships can last a long time and sometimes forever but bad relationships can end very quickly. In some cases, relationships determine the direction life will take and they can change everything. Although love and relationships can sometimes be wonderful and happy, they can sometimes lead to things such as madness, suicide and depression.

This is the case in Hamlet. A comparison of the love relationship between Ophelia and Hamlet and Gertrude and Claudius, will illustrate that betrayal, selfishness and lack of love cause the downfall of these relationships. There are many examples of betrayal in the play Hamlet. In these examples betrayal leads to the destruction of relationships. Claudius is the king of Denmark and he will do anything to stay that way. His wife Gertrude loves her son Hamlet and Claudius knows that.

In order to stay king he must please Gertrude, therefore he pretends to love Hamlet in front of Gertrude but behind her back, he plots to murder Hamlet. " I will work him To an exploit, now ripe in my device, under the which he shall not choose but fall. And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe" 1. Gertrude's trust is betrayed by Claudius at that moment because Gertrude believes that Claudius loves Hamlet, when in fact, he despises him and wishes death upon him. Claudius is not the only character that betrays in the play Hamlet. Hamlet makes Ophelia believe that he loves her for a long time, until one day he tells her things that break her heart. Because Hamlet suspects that someone is listening to his conversation with Ophelia, he acts like a mad man and says cruel things to Ophelia. " Virtue cannot so inoculate

our old stock but we shall relish of it. I loved you not.”(III, i, 118-120) All the promises he had made to her before that day are now broken; he has betrayed her trust. Hamlet and Claudius betrayed someone that they were supposed to love. Because of this betrayal the relationships they had ended in a sad tragedy. Although trust is a major part of a relationship, selfishness is an even more important part of a relationship. Particularly in the case of Hamlet. Claudius and Hamlet are both very selfish men. Claudius wants to be the king of Denmark and he does not care about anything else, not even Gertrude. Claudius killed Gertrude’s husband because he wanted to marry Gertrude and have the throne for himself. “ Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the KING’s ears, and exit.” (III, ii, 126). Claudius does not love Gertrude but yet he will do anything to let her believe that he does love her, just to be king. Hamlet is also a very selfish man. He has a great hatred for Claudius and the only thing he thinks about is killing Claudius to get revenge for the murder of his father. “ Haste me to know’t, that I, with wings as swift As meditation or the thoughts of love, may sweep to my revenge.”(I, v, 29-31). Because the only thing on Hamlet’s mind is the murder of Claudius, he does not consider Ophelia’s feelings and treats her very poorly. Hamlet is so caught up, that he even kills Ophelia’s father thinking it is Claudius. Hamlet and Claudius do not care about anybody but themselves. In order to have a working relationship it is very important to care about other people and not only yourself, this is why the relationship between Ophelia and Hamlet and Claudius and Gertrude did not last. However, selfishness is not the only factor in the downfall of these relationships. Lack of love also plays a major role. Throughout the play,

Gertrude and Claudius seem to be very much in love, they are constantly kissing and hugging but when their relationship is observed more closely, it is obvious that this is not the case. The marriage between Gertrude and Claudius takes place just two months after the death of Gertrude's past husband. Although at times Claudius seems to love Gertrude, in the final act of the play he proves that he does not and never did love her. When Gertrude picks up the poisoned goblet of wine, Claudius knows that she will die if he does not do something but his only words to prevent her from drinking the poison are, " Gertrude, do not drink." (V, ii, 272). If he would have said, " Gertrude, it is poison, do not drink" she would not have died , but he did not love her enough to ruin his reputation to save her life. Much like Claudius, Hamlet seems to love Gertrude at the beginning of the play but later on Hamlet accidentally kills Polonius, Ophelia's father, and feels no remorse for doing so. Soon after Polonius's death Ophelia goes mad. Hamlet does not care at all, he does not even seem to notice. If Hamlet loved Ophelia he would have tried to help her get through the hard time she was having, but he did not. A relationship can only be good and last for a long time if both the parties are in love. Hamlet and Claudius did not truly love Gertrude and Ophelia and that is the tragic reason for the end of these relationships. Although relationships can sometimes be very happy, they can sometimes become failures and fall apart if there is betrayal, lack of love and selfishness. This is the case in the relationships between Ophelia and Hamlet and Gertrude and Claudius. Relationships are a very important part of everybody's life. To keep these relationships from being destroyed there must be a sense of trust, love and selfishness. It is also important to have

other things in a relationship like, honesty and compassion. Having a good relationship takes a lot of work and a lot of time, both parties must be willing to give these things up and sometimes even give up a little part of themselves.